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## A Comparative Analysis of Transition Models for Eighth Grade Students with Multiple Disabilities Prior to Attending Illinois High Schools in Cook, Dupage, and Lake Counties

Maria P. Smith  
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Loyola University Chicago

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRANSITION MODELS FOR  
EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES  
PRIOR TO ATTENDING ILLINOIS HIGH SCHOOLS IN  
COOK, DUPAGE, AND LAKE COUNTIES

The purpose of this study was to compare transition activities and models of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. Identifying effective transition practices and barriers may result in the students with multiple disabilities experiencing less regression, reducing anxiety, and being more successful in their new setting (school). Staff members working with eighth grade students with multiple disabilities were given a survey with Likert-scale items and open-ended items that addressed effective transition practices and barriers to effective transition practices. The participants indicated a willingness to be involved in a follow-up interview. The receiving high school staff of the students with multiple disabilities were surveyed as to what effective transition practices and barriers that the staff and students encountered when the students with multiple disabilities were transitioned to the high school. The participants indicated a willingness to be involved in a follow-up

interview.

The Likert-scale items on both surveys were listed by frequency, percentages, and were statistically analyzed using chi-square analysis. Chi-square analysis was also completed on the combined first and second survey Likert-scale items. An ANOVA procedures were applied to test the differences among the first and second survey Likert-scale responses. The open-ended items and interview responses were categorized and listed by frequency.

Results indicated that there needs to be effective, individual transition plans for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. There needs to be effective communication systems for sending and receiving staffs. Continuum of the curriculum needs to be addressed by eighth grade and high school staff. Parents need to be encouraged to participate in the individual educational plan and transition plan for their eighth grade children with multiple disabilities. Eighth grade students and staff should continue to visit and observe the high school prior to graduation. Student files and reports should be given to receiving high school prior to the student attending the high school. There should be constant monitoring and investigation of the practices and activities of transition models; to more effectively transition eighth grade students with disabilities, prior to attending high school.

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TRANSITION MODELS FOR  
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COOK, DUPAGE, AND LAKE COUNTIES

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY  
OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION OF  
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO IN  
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

BY

MARIA P. SMITH

JANUARY, 1997

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## VITA

The author, Maria Palmieri Smith, was born in Chicago, Illinois on February 10, 1956. She obtained her elementary education at Union Ridge School, in Harwood Heights, Illinois. She obtained her secondary education at Ridgewood High School in Norridge, Illinois, in 1974.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Children and youth with disabilities may be eligible for special education services and programs. They may be entitled to these programs and services under P.L. 94-142, the Education For All Handicapped Children Act. This law mandates programs and services for children and youth with disabilities from the ages of three to twenty-one. The law also mandates that the student be provided with a free and appropriate education, in the least restrictive environment, according to their individual education plan (IEP). On October 30, 1990, Public Law 101-476, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) became law. This act includes a federal definition of transition services as:

a coordinated set of activities for a student designed from within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community and adult education, or community participation. The coordinated set of activities shall be based upon the individual student's needs, taking into account the student's preferences and interests, and shall include instruction, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living skills and functional vocational evaluation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Individuals with Disabilities Act, P.L. 101-476, October 30, 1990.

Public Law 101-476 requires:

A statement of the needed transition services for students beginning no later than age 16 and annually thereafter (and, when determined appropriate for the individual, beginning at age 14 or younger), including, when appropriate, a statement of the interagency responsibilities or linkages (or both) before the student leaves the school setting.<sup>2</sup>

In 1986, the State of Illinois defined transition as:

a dynamic process involving a partnership of consumers, school-aged services, post-school services and local communities (employers, neighbors, etc.) that results in maximum levels of employment, independent living, integration and community participation.<sup>3</sup>

The focus of the transition legislature is on the student eligible for special education programs and services, transitioning to the workplace. This mandate does not require transition planning from elementary school to high school. All students may have difficulty transitioning to new schools, teachers and environments; transitions may be especially difficult for individuals with disabilities.

Children and youth with disabilities may begin their school careers at age three. The first transition may be entering a school program for the first time. They may attend an early childhood program until kindergarten or first grade age. At that time, they may transition to an elementary school program. This program may be in a regular

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<sup>2</sup>Victoria Stephens, Transition Services from the Parent's Point of View (Illinois State Board of Education, January, 1992).

<sup>3</sup>Susan Bates, Innovative Practices in Transition Services (Illinois State Board of Education, May, 1990).

education program, at their home school, with special supports and/or services. The continuum of services may include a placement in a self-contained or segregated placement with other children with disabilities.

A Transition Needs Assessment for Younger Children was completed in December, 1989, by Rosemary Egan. Some of the recommendations of the study include conducting a pre-transition meeting, visiting the new setting, empowering parents as partners, and follow-up activities. Parents viewed successful transitions for their children when the transition incorporated the aforementioned activities.

Transitions continue throughout the life of the child with and without a disability according to MacHugan.

Transition, change, or movement is a way of life for all of us. However, if you are a person with a disability, parent of a child with a disability, or a service provider for persons with disabilities, movement from one environment to another cannot be taken for granted and requires careful consideration and planning.<sup>4</sup>

MacHugan's manual encourages planning and decision-making by the involved participants and includes checklists and a description of an individual student's transition throughout her school career. The manual also includes a checklist for parents of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities transitioning to high school programs as well

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<sup>4</sup>Kirk MacHugan, Transitioning Manual for Parents, Regular and Special Educators, Vocational Counselors, Students, and Adults with Disabilities (Protection and Advocacy System) (New Mexico: New Mexico State Department of Education, Santa Fe, 1989), Preface, i.

as the parents' Individual Education Plan (IEP) goals and Individual Transition Plan (ITP) for their child. The focus of this section of the manual is on preparing the student for the work place. The manual does not incorporate specific activities or models for transitioning eighth grade students with multiple disabilities to high school programs.

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services' definition of transition was developed by Madeline Will in 1984. It states:

Transition from school to working life is an outcome-oriented process encompassing a broad array of services and experiences that lead to employment. Transition is a period that includes high school, the point of graduation, additional post-secondary education or adult services, and the initial years of employment. Transition is a bridge between the security and structure offered by the school and the opportunities and risks of adult life.<sup>5</sup>

The emphasis of this definition is the transition of the student to the workplace. Effective transition activities and models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities to high school are not described nor discussed. Students with multiple disabilities pose specific needs and careful planning prior to transitioning to a new program or school. One of the difficulties that occur when transitioning students with multiple disabilities to high school, may be the use of their unique methods of communication, adaptive equipment, specialized curriculum, physical limitations, and behavior management plans. The

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<sup>5</sup>Madeline Will, Office of Civil Rights, 1984.

high school staff may need to have special inservice prior to working with the student.

Students with unique needs may experience significant regression when transitioning from one program to another. The transition to high school may include a change in their environment, professional staff, program, and goals. Current transition activities and models need to be reviewed and analyzed. Specific activities and models of transitioning students with multiple disabilities from eighth grade to high school may become more effective. There may be (1) a lack of transition planning; or (2) barriers to effective planning for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities transitioning to high school. Consequently, it is important to study transition models and barriers to effective transition models.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to compare the transition activities and models of eighth grade (or middle school) students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. Effective transition practices and barriers to effective transitioning will be studied. Students with special needs have multiple disabilities and generally experience regression with transitions. This regression affects the students' overall progress. A pre and post survey and interviews, comparing transition models among eighth grade and high school districts will be reviewed and



analyzed. Recommendations of effective transition activities and models will be described.

### Definition of Terms

The terms that will be discussed in this dissertation are defined for the purpose of this research. These terms are frequently used when describing programs and services for students with multiple disabilities.

1. Adaptive Equipment - Equipment that is specifically designed for the individual student to function in their school, home or community. Adaptive equipment may vary from built-up eating utensils to computer switches and software.

2. Home School - This is the school that the child would attend if they were not disabled.

3. Individual Education Plan (IEP) - A written statement required by P.L. 94-142 which is developed by the child study or an IEP Team and contains the following parts: a statement of the child's current level of educational performance; annual goals and short-term instructional objectives; a description of the services to be provided and the extent to which the child will be able to participate in regular educational programs; and the projected initiation date and the anticipated duration of service; objective criteria for determining, at least annually, whether short-term instructional objectives have been achieved.

4. Individual Transition Plan (ITP) - A written plan for all eligible special education students developed the

year the student turns fourteen and one-half years old, that lists desired student outcomes, services needed to attain outcomes, and assessments for employment, post-secondary education, and residential.

5. Least Restrictive Environment - The requirement of P.L. 94-142 that to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with non-disabled peers. It also states that special classes, separate school, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aides and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

6. Mandate - An order issued by a court of law or a legislative act.

7. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) - A department of the federal government in the United States Department of Education which oversees special education and rehabilitation programs and funding.

8. Self-Contained Classroom - A special education classroom in which students receive individual instruction for more than 50% of the school day.

9. Special Education Cooperative - A group of school districts working together to provide special education services and programs for students with disabilities.

10. Students with Multiple Disabilities - Students

that have more than one type of disability. This could be a combination of physical, mental capacity, and sensory (blind/deaf). The combination of which causes severe educational problems which may not be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments.

### Research Questions

Two questions were posed to direct this study:

1. What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?
2. What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?

### Methodology

This study was conducted using special education eighth grade and high school staff teaching students with multiple disabilities. A descriptive method of research was used. The first survey was sent to sixty-two staff of students with multiple disabilities who completed eighth grade during the spring of 1992. This survey listed transition activities that the respondents ranked on a Likert-scale. Examples included high school visitations, curriculum continuum, staff release time, parent involvement, and unique student needs. There were also open-ended questions, where the respondent described individual transition

activities and barriers to effective transition planning. The subjects for the first survey were the staff of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities from Cook, DuPage, and Lake Counties. The surveys were sent to the special education cooperative or district offices. Then the surveys were mailed to the staff's home residences. A cover letter explaining the significance of the survey itself, and a self-addressed stamped envelope accompanied the survey. The respondents indicated a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview.

In the fall of 1992, a second survey was distributed to fifty-nine receiving high school teachers of students with multiple disabilities who graduated in the spring of 1992. This survey listed transition activities that their students participated in and how they rated the effectiveness of the transition programs. Open-ended questions were included to describe individual transition activities and barriers to effective transition planning. As with the first survey, a cover letter, explaining the significance of the survey itself, and a self-addressed envelope accompanied the second survey. Some of the respondents also indicated a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview.

Follow-up interviews were conducted. The eighth grade teachers of the first survey follow-up interviews were conducted in the months of September and October, 1992. The freshmen teachers of the second survey follow-up interviews

were conducted in January and February, 1993. Questions focused on effectiveness of and barriers to transitioning eighth grade students with multiple disabilities to high school. The interviews provided additional data to draw conclusions for the research study.

The surveys and interview questions were developed by the researcher. The surveys and interview questions were field tested in Illinois by a special education administrator, a special education teacher, an elementary school principal, and a public agency special education consultant.

This research used the descriptive method to describe current transition practices: "Descriptive research attempts to describe the existing behaviors, opinions, attitudes, or other characteristics of the group or culture."<sup>6</sup> A qualitative methodology from data collected was also used from the survey. The interviews were analyzed and described. There was no attempt to control the variables in the study.

Nonexperimental researchers tend to observe, analyze, and describe what exists rather than manipulating the variable under study. Non-experimental researchers do not use direct control such as a laboratory in the same fashion that is characteristic of experimentation. Additionally, nonexperimental research is more often conducted in the natural environment than experimentation.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Clifford J. Drew, Introduction to Design and Conducting Research (St. Louis: The C.N. Mosley Co., 1980), 120..

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 32.

Statistical analysis (ANOVA and chi-square) was used to identify significant differences in eighth grade staff and high school staff opinions on effective transition practices and barriers to effective transition practices. Qualitative analysis was conducted on open-ended survey responses and interview responses. The responses were categorized and tallied. The qualitative analysis reviewed opinions of participants and trends on current transition practices.

#### Limitations of the Study

There are a number of factors limiting this study:

1. The surveys were given to special education administrators. There was no control of distribution, due to the anonymity of the survey respondents.

2. Surveys were distributed to teachers of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities in June, 1992. The second survey was distributed to teachers of students entering their first year of high school in September, 1992. The receiving staff have been first year staff and may not have been a part of the transition planning from the previous spring.

3. The surveys returned in the summer and in the fall could not be matched by school or district. All summer responses were tallied together. All fall responses were tallied together. There was no control to match school by school, nor district by district.

4. Students with multiple disabilities are low in

incidence rate. Survey population was subsequently low. The response rate to the survey was also low. The return rate of the first survey was 37.10 percent. The response rate of the second survey was 38.98 percent. Therefore, the results of this survey must be viewed with caution.

### Organization of the Study

The first chapter reviews the introduction and overview, purpose of this study and research questions.

Chapter II reviews current transition models and practices for students with disabilities. The transition models are reviewed by the chronological and developmental age of the student. This chapter also reviews federal legislature regarding students with disabilities and transition.

Chapter III discusses the methodology and administration of the first and second survey. This chapter also reviews the interview implementation.

Chapter IV analyzes and discusses the survey and interview responses.

Chapter V states the summary of the research, conclusions, and recommendations for future transition practices for students with multiple disabilities transitioning from eighth grade to high school.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Transitions are a part of life; some represent milestones in our development, others pass nearly unnoticed.<sup>1</sup>

All people experience changes or transitions throughout their life. These transitions may effect their living, educational, or work environments. Transitions may be especially difficult for individuals with disabilities. The process of adjusting to a new environment may cause a regression in the individuals' abilities. Specifically, students with disabilities may experience regression in their cognitive, speech, physical, and social skills. This chapter will review transition models and practices and legislature regarding transitioning students with disabilities.

#### Empirical Research

Children with disabilities may transition several times during their educational career. An example would be of a child with multiple disabilities transitioning from a birth

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<sup>1</sup>Susan A. Fowler, Ilene Schwartz, and Jane Atwater, "Perspectives on the Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten for Children with Disabilities and their Families," Exceptional Children 58 (October, November 1991): 136.



to three program to an early childhood program. This child may then transition to a full day primary program, intermediate program, junior high program, and then to high school. Every time this child transitions to a new environment, there may be a new set of service providers, transportation accommodations, and environments. The student and their parents/guardians must adjust to these changes.

The transition practices and models for students with disabilities vary from school district to school district. Several school districts have developed transition models, and manuals for students with disabilities. Many school districts do not have an effective model for transitioning students with disabilities. The method of transitioning varies for each child. Transition activities may vary depending on the age of the student, their disability, the type of service provided and local resources.

There are two critical components necessary for any successful transition. The first of these is planning. Proper planning for transitions will result in the most effective and efficient use of staff and student energies and resources. The second critical component is communication. In essence, this component is a necessary part of effective planning. However, communication must occur not only during the planning phase, but also during the actual transition and follow-up activities.<sup>2</sup>

Transition planning must include key players. The key

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<sup>2</sup>Anne M. Beninghof, "Transitions to Least Restrictive Environments: A Guide to Transition, Revised," Connecticut State Department of Education Support Services (July 1991): 1.

players are the parents, staff, and depending on the age and other factors, the student. This transition team makes decisions regarding placement, transition activities and timelines. This team also monitors the effectiveness of the transition and any modifications to the current program.

Federal laws Public Law 94-142 and Public Law 101-476 mandate that public schools identify and refer the parents of children from birth to three years of age suspected of a disability to agencies that can provide assessment and services. These laws also require that school districts provide appropriate programs and services to children ages three to twenty-one. The child and family may then receive services from social service agencies. The social service agency develops an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP). The IFSP includes services that the child and family may receive.

At the heart of the new infant and toddler program (Public Law 99-457), is the development of an Individual Family Service Plan. Public Law 99-457 focuses on the parent and the family as well as the child with the disability.<sup>3</sup>

The Individual Family Service Plan may include the following services: occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy. The IFSP is reviewed at least every six months. When the child becomes three years old, they may

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<sup>3</sup>Kirk MacGugan, Transitioning Manual for Parents, Regular and Special Educator, Vocational Counselors, Students and Adults with Disabilities, Protection and Advocacy System (New Mexico: New Mexico State Department of Education, Santa Fe, 1989), 5.

become eligible for educational programs and services from their local public school. The child with an identified disability may then attend an early childhood program. "The first transition will be the hardest because it is here that you the parents learn you have a child with a disability."<sup>4</sup>

Parents of a three year old child with disabilities may be confronted for the first time that their child has a disability, or the severity of the child's disability. Their child may qualify for special education early childhood programs and services. Their children may travel on a bus and attend a half day of school. This may be the first time that the child is away from their parent. (And the first time that the parent is separated from the child!) The parent is trusting the staff to care for their child's physical, emotional, social, and possible medical needs. Children receiving birth to three services may have formed strong relationships with service providers. It may be difficult for the child and the parents to transition to another set of service providers.

Smooth transition is dependent upon progress in almost every area of service: personnel preparation, parent involvement, comprehensive tracking systems and most importantly, interagency coordination. 'Transitioning' refers not to one element of service but to the repeated passage of the child and family from one set of service circumstances to another.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>5</sup>Alfred Healey, Patricia D. Keesee and Barbara Smith, Early Services for Children with Special Needs: Transitions for Family Support (Iowa City: University of Iowa, 1985), 88.

All elements of the transition must be addressed with the current service providers and future service providers. These elements may include transportation, therapies, communication systems, medical needs, and other specialized care. "A smooth transition does not just happen. It requires a common commitment to children and families, good planning, sharing of information, and well-trained staff to be successful."<sup>6</sup>

Parents need to know what services and programs are available for their children. In past research, a survey was distributed to ninety-two parents of infants and children to identify information and services that would be helpful as they and their children made the transition into public school preschool special education programs. Parent concerns during this period of transition were identified.

Results of the survey indicated that families were most interested in information and services which would allow them to obtain and manage the particular special education and related services appropriate for their child. Concerns centered around being away from their child for long periods, dealing with an unfamiliar agency, and being assured of receiving appropriate services.<sup>7</sup>

Professionals and practical methods may support parents in the transition process.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Mary Frances Hanline, "Making the Transition to Preschool: Identification of Parent Needs," Journal of the Division for Early Childhood 12 (1988): 98.

An important prerequisite to success in transition is the adaptation of a continual, rather than time-bound, approach to the process by both parents and professionals. Definitions of the term transition have in common the concept that it is passage or an evolution, simply a 'here today, gone tomorrow' phenomenon. As applied to the field of early intervention, this implies that transition is more than simply transferring records or physically relocation a child in a new program. Rather, it is the first in a series of moves to be encountered by the child and his or her family, one that will set the stage for all future transitions.<sup>8</sup>

It is important for the family to develop a rapport with the staff. Researchers have

suggested that a detailed transition plan should be developed approximately six months before the transition. Staff also need time to build rapport with the child and family before they can effectively provide support in the initial phases of transition.<sup>9</sup>

This research also discussed developing parents' transition skills, which include training parents in record keeping and transition notebooks, increase communication skills, and increase observation skills through comprehensive transition planning. Expected outcomes of comprehensive transition planning were reviewed. They included:

Parents recognize the importance of systematic planning for their children's future needs.

Parents acquire skills that can be applied to future transitions.

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<sup>8</sup>Andrea M. Lazzari and Jennifer L. Kilgo, "Practical Methods for Supporting Parents in Early Transitions," Teaching Exceptional Children 22 (Fall 1989): 40.

<sup>9</sup>D. Bailey, "Considerations in Developing Family Goals," in D. Bailey and R. Simeonson (Eds.), Family Assessment in Early Intervention (Ohio: Merrill, 1988).

Parents learn to be active participants in the intervention process.

Services are delivered with minimal disruptions, and program continuity is achieved.

Role ambiguity among service providers is minimized.

Program administrators can budget more effectively for future fiscal needs.

Parents and service providers learn the benefits of collaborative efforts in achieving transition goals that can be generalized across other situations and settings.<sup>10</sup>

In another study, researchers interviewed parents of infants and toddlers on transition planning. These children were transitioning to preschool programs. Parents were asked:

How far in advance of the change would you like to begin discussing the change with your home teacher?

Do you think planning should have begun earlier? Later?

Do you want to be involved in transition planning?

What kind of preparation do you think is important before your child leaves the present program?

How can the program staff make the change easier for you and your child?

Do you think it is important for your home teacher to provide follow-up services for your child (e.g., visit to the new program to see how things are going) after your child has left the present program?

Is there anything else you would like to add regarding program changes for your child?<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Lazzari and Kilgo, 43.

<sup>11</sup>Linda McDonald et al., "Parent Perspectives: Transition to Preschool," Teaching Exceptional Children (Fall 1989): 5-6.

The researchers analyzed the data and made four major recommendations.

1. Begin transition planning at least six months to a year prior to a change in programs.
2. Ask the families how they would like to be involved in the transition process and respect their choices.
3. Facilitate the transition by helping the families plan for future environments.
4. Provide follow-up support to the families and the staff of the new program.<sup>12</sup>

The researchers recommended a four-step planning process for transition planning.

- Step One -- Determine time frame
- Step Two -- Add transition goals to the Individual Family Plan
- Step Three -- Establish a timeline
- Step Four -- Provide follow-up<sup>13</sup>

Transition needs assessments were developed for parents of younger special education students and service providers. This study involved interviews, surveys, and workshops with parents and service providers. Parent concerns and needs identified in workshops were:

Knowledge of parent and child rights

Parent Advocacy training

Community skills

Information on public schools

Information on agencies providing ancillary services

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 6.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 6-8.

## Transportation arrangements<sup>14</sup>

### Service providers concerns and needs:

Communication with other agencies

Transfer of the child's records from one setting to the next

Knowing more about the facilities which send and receive children to and from their setting

How best to help families during the transition process

Resolving their own feelings about separation from families and children who are leaving their classroom

Teaching parents their rights

Helping parents communicate their needs

Obtaining follow-up data on children who have made a transition into another setting.<sup>15</sup>

The staff also noted that the transition may be a very difficult and anxious time for both children and their families.

Parents may also feel upset about the loss of the secure relationships they had established in the child's current setting.<sup>16</sup>

Six recommendations were listed, based on interviews, surveys and workshops:

- 1) Evaluate current transition practices
- 2) Assist parents in accessing support

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<sup>14</sup>Rosemary W. Egan, "Transition Needs Assessment for Younger Special Education Students," Northeastern Illinois University research funded and published by Illinois Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities (December, 1989): 40.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 43.



- 3) Establish a timeline for transition activities
- 4) Delineate the channels of communication for parents and service providers
- 5) Prepare for, plan, and implement the child's assessment and subsequent placement
- 6) Evaluate the transition and conduct follow-up activities.<sup>17</sup>

In the survey results:

the timing of events was identified as a crucial factor in planning transitions by both parents and service providers. The results from the project surveys indicated that parents wanted to begin planning for the transition on the average of eight months in advance of the actual transition. In addition, many parents felt they had not had enough time to understand the transition. The parents who were the least satisfied with the new placement for their child indicated that they did not feel that they had been given enough time to think over and understand the information given about the transition. In contrast, the most satisfied parents felt that there had been sufficient time to plan and understand the transition.<sup>18</sup>

Timeline development for transition plans were recommended. It was recommended:

that parents and service providers establish the transition timeline at the start of the child's last year in the program. This is usually a period of eight to nine months in advance of the transition. Planning of the timeline this far in advance allows the parents to participate fully in the transition activities and ensures that necessary documents and paperwork will be completed on time. The recommended method for developing a timeline and scheduling transition activities is for the service providers to list all of the transition activities, and then put them into a sequential and chronological order. Careful organization of the timeline results in a planned, systematic transition process which benefits sending

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 39-62.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 46-47.

and receiving staff, children and their parents.<sup>19</sup>

Communication between parents and service providers effected transition planning. Researchers found that families were under-utilized as potential sources of information because agencies had no established communication network for parents. These authors further stated that "when parents became actively involved in communicating with professionals at the earliest planning stages of the transition, they were better able to prepare their child for the move to the next program."<sup>20</sup> It was also important for service providers to communicate. This study went on to discuss specific agencies' suggestions for increasing interagency communication, "including making a notebook to send to the next agency regarding each child's likes and dislikes, established methods of behavior management and effective positioning techniques."<sup>21</sup> Parents who were the most satisfied with their child's new placement felt that, "what they said to service providers in the IEP meeting had some effect on those attending the meeting, while the parents who were not satisfied with the new placement felt that what they said at the staffing did

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<sup>19</sup>L. Blair-Thomas et al., Project ENTRANS (Monmouth, OR: Oregon State System of Higher Education, Teaching Research Division).

<sup>20</sup>A.H. Haines, S.A. Fowler and L.K. Chandler, "Planning School Transition: Family and Professional Collaboration," Journal of the Division for Early Childhood 12 (1988).

<sup>21</sup>Egan, 49.

not matter."<sup>22</sup> The conclusion of the study stated that, "Communication was identified as a key factor in successful transitions by parents and service providers."<sup>23</sup>

The last step that was recommended was the evaluation of the transition and to conduct follow-up activities. "The knowledge that they will talk with this service provider again after the transition can be reassuring to parents as they plan their child's transition."<sup>24</sup> The post-transaction follow-up activities consist of "evaluations of the child's progress in the new setting by parents, and by the sending and receiving service providers."<sup>25</sup>

As the early childhood student grows older, they may then need to transition to kindergarten. The Transition Manual for Parents, Regular and Special Educators, Vocational Counselors, Students, and Adults with Disabilities, called this Transition Phase Number Three. There have been studies that have looked at perspectives and steps on transitioning children from preschool to kindergarten. One study looked at assessing important skills needed for future environments. "It was felt that students that receive instruction on skills needed in

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 50.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 55.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 59.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 61.

kindergarten, did better in kindergarten programs."<sup>26</sup>

This study also discussed the sense of belonging that the preschool child has in their current environment. "Children will acquire new skills, behaviors, routines, friends, and a sense of belonging in their preschool program. The transition to kindergarten may disrupt many of the patterns established in the preschool program."<sup>27</sup>

As with the transition to a preschool program, the families and children have to transition to new service providers. "Families and children with form bonds with programs and staff during the years that they receive preschool services. Leaving these services can be a painful or stressful experience for both teachers and families."<sup>28</sup>

These are recommended steps to prepare for transitioning from preschool to kindergarten. "Transition skills are the skills and behaviors that a child will need to cope with the requirements of the new program."<sup>29</sup>

The first step for preparing children for the transitions is "to develop a list of transition skills that may be required for successful transition to the next

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<sup>26</sup>Fowler, Schwartz, and Fowler, 137.

<sup>27</sup>P. Ziegler, "Saying Good-bye to Preschool," Young Children 41, 11-15.

<sup>28</sup>Fowler, Schwartz, and Atwater, 137.

<sup>29</sup>Lynette K. Chandler, "Steps in Preparing for Transition Preschool to Kindergarten," Teaching Exceptional Children 25 (Summer, 1993): 55.

educational environment. This can be done by observing receiving programs conducting teacher interviews, examining existing literature on adapting skills."<sup>30</sup>

The next step would be to "develop methods for teaching transitions skills at a class-wide level, with all children participating in the activities. Incorporate skills into classroom activities as routines."<sup>31</sup> They also recommended that transition preparation activities should begin in the second half of the final preschool year. The receiving service providers were recommended to continue classwide and individualized transition preparation steps.

The fourth transition phase of the Transition Manual for Parents, Regular and Special Educators, Vocational Counselors, Students and Adults with Disabilities is to elementary schools, grades first through sixth. "One of your transition steps here is to be assured that your child has learned all the skills necessary for a smooth move to first grade and then similarly to grades two through six."<sup>32</sup>

They recommended that:

Parents should visit elementary school in the spring before annual meeting

Look at all classroom options

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>MacGugan, 35.

Parents should participate in all meetings

Find out how other parents have transitioned their children with disabilities into a variety of school and after school programs.<sup>33</sup>

The fifth phase is for students to middle school grades, seven through nine. This phase stresses that "testing should include vocational assessment process as early as possible."<sup>34</sup> They stress the importance of vocational goals into middle school individual education plans. They listed a checklist of several activities for parents. The activities included:

Begin thinking of child's vocational future

Visit school before classes begin

Meet with school principal

Increase parent networking<sup>35</sup>

Another article reviewed a transition process checklist. Some activities included: "recommendations for placement; assess the receiving environment and student's strengths and needs, with particular attention to skills which will enhance the transition and integration with peers."<sup>36</sup> The researchers also noted that it should be determined how and why the student will be informed of the transition. The transition should

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 35.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 47.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Beninghof, 310.

Begin providing instruction to the student in areas which will assist him/her with the transition to the new environment.

Identify the staff who will be involved with the student.

Assess each staff person's training needs in relation to transitioning and integrating the student.

Provide necessary training to staff.

Send receiving staff to visit the student in his/her current placement.

Arrange for current staff/parents to visit new placement.

Arrange for student to visit new placement one or more times.

Provide opportunities for sending and receiving staff, and others to meet to discuss student.

Arrange for any necessary modifications to physical plant or equipment.

Set up communication systems between necessary parties.

Transition students to new placement (part time or full time, based on student needs).<sup>37</sup>

This activity checklist had a column for: date(s) scheduled, person(s) responsible, details/comments, and date completed.

The next transition phase in the transition manual is from middle school to high school. This section of the manual was written to the student and stressed the importance of the student being a part of the transition team. This phase also discussed the transition from school to work. According to other researchers, "a basic aspect of transition has been unaddressed, the transition from

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 310.

elementary to secondary school."<sup>38</sup> They discussed several factors "that make the transition to secondary school among the most demanding a student with disabilities encounters. As with any transition, the difficulty is largely due to the stress caused by losing a familiar support network."<sup>39</sup>

This stress is compounded by the fundamental "differences between elementary and secondary schools in terms of instructional methods, teaching styles, contact time with students."<sup>40</sup>

The authors stated that effective communication is essential.

Identifying such differences and determining how they may affect individual students must be primary administrative goals in any transition plan. This can only be achieved through effective communication among all parties involved at both the sending and receiving schools.<sup>41</sup>

As with the transition models previously discussed for younger children receiving special education programs and services, these authors noted the importance of planning and preparation.

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<sup>38</sup>Robert G. McKenzie and Carolyn S. Houk, "Across the Great Divide, Transition from Elementary to Secondary Settings for Students with Mild Disabilities," Teaching Exceptional Children 25 (Winter 1993): 16.

<sup>39</sup>C. Dalke and S. Schmitt, "Meeting the Transition Needs of College-Bound Students with Learning Disabilities," Journal of Learning Disabilities 20 (1987): 176-180.

<sup>40</sup>J.B. Schumaker and D.D. Deshler, "Implementing the Regular Education Initiative in Secondary Schools, A Different Ball Game," Journal of Learning Disabilities 21 (1988): 36-42.

<sup>41</sup>McKenzie and Houk, 19.



Student preparation for the transition to secondary school must begin well in advance of the final elementary school year. Optimal time varies, according to each student's needs/skills. Ideally, instructional priorities related to transition should be established at least two years prior to the change in settings.<sup>42</sup>

The methods that are used in the current educational settings needs to incorporate skills needed in the receiving educational setting.

Regardless of the instructional methods employed "transfer of learning will occur only if students are provided with opportunities to practice each skill in situations that closely resemble the secondary school setting."<sup>43</sup>

The administration of the transition plan "varies depending on the size of a school district and the schools within it. Regardless of the precise structure chosen, a clearly defined transition team for each secondary school and its elementary 'feeders' will provide a vehicle for implementing and monitoring the plan."<sup>44</sup> The success of the transition "will be successful if the school staffs are communicative, interdependent, and focused on a common goal."<sup>45</sup>

The Montana Model for Education of the Severely

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 20.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

Handicapped (MESH) workbook was developed to provide parents with basic information about transition and the MESH model for transition planning. They described the term transition as

the movement of special education students from school into the community. Transition has become an issue because there is evidence that, when special education students leave school, they are not always prepared to meet the demands of getting a job, finding a place to live, and becoming a functioning adult in the community.<sup>46</sup>

As with other studies, this model recommends that "planning for transition needs to begin early so there is plenty of time to prepare the student and teach him or her the skills required to function as an adult in the community."<sup>47</sup> The MESH model for transition suggests that transition planning become an ongoing process, beginning whenever a student enters special education and ending whenever he or she eventually leaves school.

Each time that a student faces a major change from one environment or program to another, the change can be analyzed to determine:

1. How this step fits into long range goals for the student.
2. What skills are necessary for the student to be successful in the next environment.<sup>48</sup>

The results of transition planning effect the future

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<sup>46</sup>Katharin Kelker and Michael Hagen, Parents and Transition: A Self-Teaching Workbook (Montana: The Montana Center for Handicapped Children, July 1983-June 1986), 1.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 25.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

placements of students with special needs. "Transition planning encourages serious thinking about the student's current placement, about the most likely future placements and the requirements of that future environments."<sup>49</sup>

Special educators were recommended to:

- 1) teach skills required in the new environment.
- 2) when necessary, provide instruction in the new environment.
- 3) share successful methods and teaching techniques with instructors in the next environment.
- 4) when necessary, accompany the student into the new environment until the placement is stable and the teacher's presence can be faded out.<sup>50</sup>

Studies recommending longitudinal transition plans for students that are severely handicapped looked at the student's school environments. Students that were in segregated schools transitioned fewer number of times. They had two significant transitions: from home to school, usually under age five; and from school to 'workshop' usually at age twenty-two. "It can be seen that segregated school models generate little need for clearly articulated, longitudinal, comprehensive, individually designed, and systematically implemented transition plans."<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 32.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 32-33.

<sup>51</sup>Lou Brown et al., "Longitudinal Transition Plans in Program for Severely Handicapped Students," Proceedings from Statewide Institute for Educators of the Severely and Profoundly Handicapped (Illinois State Board of Education, 1981), 35-36.

If the student with severe disabilities is in a "school system that provides educational and related services in a regular chronological age-appropriate public school and in a wide variety of heterogeneous nonschool environment, there is an urgent need for Individualized Transition Plans (ITP)." <sup>52</sup>

Without the systematic instruction focused toward the unique characteristics of subsequent environments, a severely handicapped student will experience transition or adaptation difficulties. An ITP is an instructional strategy offered as one attempt to minimize those difficulties in that it requires two essential clusters of instruction-related actions. First, it is essential that the significant others in both current and subsequent life spaces secure individually meaningful and functional information about the array of actual school and nonschool environments in which a student is being prepared to function. Second, those significant others are then responsible for providing instructionally tenable services that enhance the probabilities of fluid and habilitative adjustments as the student moves from one cluster of environments to another. <sup>53</sup>

There are anticipated difficulties that the student with severe disabilities will have as compared to their non-disabled peers.

Most nonhandicapped students experience minimal difficulty progressing from nursery schools through high schools and colleges or to a variety of other post school environments. Thus, nonhandicapped students often visit the high school they will attend in September for one day during the last year of junior high school. Some schools merely offer a half-day orientation the morning of the first day of school. Furthermore, such episodic transition plans are usually designed and implemented by guidance counselors, administrators, and social workers, rather than by

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 36.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 37.

teachers.<sup>54</sup>

There are seven components for the Individual Transition Plan for each student with severe disabilities.

They are:

- 1) An Individual Transition Plan must be comprehensive in nature. The ITP must be designed and implemented to represent all four curricular domains (domestic, recreation/leisure, vocational, community functioning) in reasonable proportions if the educational program is to be considered even minimally comprehensive.
- 2) ITP must be truly individualized in nature. It is critical that an ITP contain precisely stated transition objectives, training activities, materials, and evaluation strategies that are functionally related to a unique life space.
- 3) An ITP must have the involvement of parents/guardians.
- 4) An ITP requires the actual participation of both sending and receiving personnel. It is critical that both the persons responsible for preparing a student to function in subsequent environments (the senders) and those persons who will be responsible for providing direct services in subsequent environments (the receivers) jointly design and assist in the implementation of a series of experiences that maximize subsequent functioning.
- 5) An ITP should include the focused expertise of component related service personnel. Sending staff and parents should actually visit and secure critical information about the wide range of environments in which a student is being prepared to function and then provide their expertise to assist in the actual transition from one environmental cluster to another.
- 6) An ITP requires direct instruction in a variety of actual subsequent environments. Severely handicapped students manifest extreme difficulties in generalizing; transferring training; and performing across environments, persons, materials, and language cues. If new skills are to be acquired, substantially more instructional time and teaching trials are required

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

than are needed by a nonhandicapped age peer.

7) An ITP should be longitudinal in nature.<sup>55</sup>

The authors stated that

it is critical that the educational curricula offered provide the appropriate preparatory experiences and that the significant others in sending and receiving environments jointly designing and implement ITP in an attempt to ensure that the educational and related services offered are meaningful and functionally related to the variety of least restrictive school and nonschool environments in which an individual student might subsequently function.<sup>56</sup>

State and federal transition laws for secondary education students with disabilities were signed into law in 1990.

'The Interagency Coordinating Council Act' (Public Law 86-1218), signed by Governor Thompson on August 30, 1990, requires transition planning and services for secondary education students with disabilities. The federal legislation, the 'Individuals with Disabilities Education Act' (Public Law 101-476), was signed by President Bush on October 30, 1990.<sup>57</sup>

The most significant change in regard to transition from Public Law 94-142 to I.D.E.A. is that transition was considered best practice, now is an integrated part of programming planning and instruction. One change was the addition of Rehabilitation Counseling. A Rehabilitation Counselor is "a person that assists with students on career

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid., 37-39.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 39.

<sup>57</sup>Philip C. Bradley and Gail Lieberman, "State and Federal Transitions Laws for Secondary Education Students with Disabilities," Illinois State Board of Education Administrative Bulletin 9-12 AB (January, 1991): 1.

development, implementation, preparation, achieving independence and integration in the work place and community of a student with a disability."<sup>58</sup> The federal laws and regulations dictate practices in three areas:

Participation in meetings

The content of the IEP

Agency responsibilities and linkages<sup>59</sup>

The Illinois Transition Project has used the following definition of transition since 1986:

Transition is a dynamic process involving a partnership of consumers, school-aged services, post-school services and local communities (employers, neighbors, etc.), that results in maximum levels of employment, independent living, integration and community participation.<sup>60</sup>

Illinois law requires that a school district shall consider the transition goals of eligible handicapped students by the school year that the student reaches age 14.5 at the district's multidisciplinary conference (MDC) and use this information, when appropriate, for the development of the individual education program. The transition goals include employment, post-secondary education, and community living. The student's transition goals are developed in their Illinois Transition Planning

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<sup>58</sup>Lizanne DeStefano and Deborah Winking, Incorporating Transition into the Individual Education Program, Manual and Resource Guide (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1993), 12-13.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>60</sup>Bradley and Lieberman, 1.

guide. The guide recommended that "transition planning is most effective if it is initiated several years prior to a student's anticipated exit from high school."<sup>61</sup>

Transition included more than school to work transition.

From a more restricted perspective, transition was described originally as a school to work related issue and defined in a 1984 U.S. Department of Education report as an 'outcome oriented process encompassing a broad array of services that lead to employment'. This conceptualization of transition was quickly expanded to incorporate a broader emphasis on post-school adjustment, including employment, community living, and social-interperson networking.<sup>62</sup>

Manuals developed for cross-agency and cross-disciplinary inservice training in the areas of transition and supported employment.

Well-trained personnel are a critical element of coordinated interagency human services in agencies and organizations which collaborates to provide transition and employment services for consumers with moderate and severe disabilities.<sup>63</sup>

Communication also needs to occur with parents.

Efficient communication can result in meaningful outcomes for students with disabilities, but only if both parents and professionals are willing to share

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<sup>61</sup>Illinois Transition Planning Guide: Directions Manual. Illinois Transition Project, Southern Illinois University, 1.

<sup>62</sup>Paul Bates, "Transition: An Energizing Concept," Feature Issue on Transition, Impact, Institute on Community Integration. Institute on Community Integration, a University Affiliated Program (University of Minnesota, Fall, 1990), 16.

<sup>63</sup>Jane M. Everson and M. Sherril Moon, "Transition Services for Young Adults with Severe Disabilities: Defining Professional and Parental Roles and Responsibilities," Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps 12 (1987): 3.



expertise and responsibilities. Increasingly, parents are voicing their opinions about the transition planning process and expressing their needs for their offspring.<sup>64</sup>

One of the goals in this manual is the individualization of the transition process.

The step by step process of developing individual transition plans for students with disabilities is a critical component of a comprehensive transition planning and implementation process. Transition plans assist teams in identifying the best adult outcomes for young adults with disabilities as well as the services and the skills they need to achieve and maintain these outcomes.<sup>65</sup>

In another manual and resource guide, two components are essential to planning for success in an effective transition. They should be "outcome-oriented and student needs and preferences driven."<sup>66</sup> This guide recommended that the transition plan be incorporated into the IEP.

In another study, successful high school transition programs looked at quality standards. These standards were compiled. Some of the quality standards included: "Students, along with their families/advocates, are included and involved in the IEP/Transition planning process. Transition planning acknowledges each student's total life

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<sup>64</sup>Ibid., 127.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., 237.

<sup>66</sup>DeStefano and Winking, 39.

experiences."<sup>67</sup>

One of the studies' recommendations was that a transition coordinator be hired to coordinate schools and agencies when the student reaches age 14 or ninth grade. This study only discussed transition from high school to work, and did not address elementary to high school transition planning.

### Conclusion

This chapter reviewed related literature on the transition of students with disabilities from one environment to another. The chronological age of the student was used to describe current transition models and practices. The studies stressed the importance of planning, community, and parental involvement. Student skills in sending and receiving environments were also addressed. Federal laws and regulations have affected the transition practices for students with disabilities. These laws have addressed students transitioning from school to the work place or post-secondary education. There appears to be more studies addressing the transition from high school to the post-secondary or the work place, than from eighth grade to high school.

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<sup>67</sup>Vicki Gaylord, ed., Transition Strategies that Work, Profiles of Successful High School Transition Programs (Minnesota: Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, June, 1991), i.

### CHAPTER III

#### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the methods used for the collection of data used in this study. The procedures used to analyze the data will also be addressed. The areas in this chapter include: (1) the design of the study; (2) subjects; (3) instruments; (4) administration of first survey; (5) implementation of first interview; (6) administration of second survey; (7) implementation of second interview; (8) method of recording results; (9) survey returns and occurrence of interviews; and (10) summary.

##### Design of the Study

The original survey and interview questions were developed by the researcher. The surveys and interview questions were field tested by administering the survey to a special education administrator, a special education teacher, an elementary school principal, and a public agency special education consultant.

The pilot test would simply involve having a few individuals complete the questionnaire before the actual study is begun to be certain that the instructions and questions are clear and to assess the time and effort required on the part of the

respondents.<sup>1</sup>

A few terms and phrases were changed, based on the recommendations from the pilot reviewers.

There were two surveys used in this study. The first survey was given to sixty-two (62) staff members of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities (see Appendix A). This researcher contacted special education administrators from Cook, DuPage and Lake counties, and requested that their staff members participate in the survey. The first survey was sent out in June of 1992. The surveys were enclosed in self-addressed envelopes and requested quantities were sent to the appropriate special education administrators. These administrators gave the surveys and enclosed envelope to appropriate staff members. The staff members completed the surveys and returned them in the enclosed envelope back to this researcher. Each survey had a letter explaining the purpose of the survey, requested the participants' demographics, the survey items, and a question regarding their willingness to participate in a follow-up survey. Surveys were sent to the district special education administrators instead of directly to the participants in an effort to protect their employees' confidentiality.

There were two follow-up interviews used in this study. Follow-up interviews were conducted with six (6) of the

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<sup>1</sup>Clifford J. Drew, Introduction to Design and Conducting Research (St. Louis: The C.N. Mosley Co., 1980), 124.

participants from among the eighth grade teachers. These participants indicated on the survey that they would be willing to participate in a follow-up survey. The purpose of the interview was to gather information about the participants' districts current effective transition practices and barriers to effective transitioning of their eighth grade students with multiple disabilities. The interviews were conducted during the months of August and September of 1992. The interviews were conducted by telephone and were scribed by the researcher. The length of the interview was recorded.

The second survey participants were fifty-nine (59) high school staff members working with freshmen students with multiple disabilities (see Appendix B). This researcher contacted the same special education administrators to send out the second survey. Again, the survey was sent to the special education administrator, along with an enclosed stamped self-addressed envelope, to distribute to their staff members working with high school students with multiple disabilities. The second survey was sent out in the fall of 1992.

The second interview participants were taken from the teachers working with freshmen students. Five (5) participants were interviewed from the second survey. The survey had a section that asked if the participant would be interested in being interviewed regarding the transition

practices of their students. The second survey interviews were conducted in the months of January and February of 1993. The interviews were conducted on the phone and were scribed by the researcher. The length of the interview was recorded.

### Subjects

The participants were staff members working with students with multiple disabilities. These students had cognitive, visual, hearing, and/or physical disabilities. The staff members could be classroom teachers, speech pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, or vocational educational teachers. The sample for this survey was very limited, as the students with multiple disabilities is a low incidence population. The demographics of the staff members participating in the surveys will be discussed in Chapter IV.

### Instruments

The surveys were sent with a cover letter explaining the purpose and intent of the study. The participants of both surveys were first requested to fill out a demographic section. The following information was requested: (1) grade level of students taught; (2) position; and (3) number of years in this position. The first survey was given to staff working with eighth grade students with multiple disabilities, and consisted of eighteen (18) items. The first fourteen (14) items were questions that required that

the answers be entered on a Likert scale. There were four (4) open-ended responses.

The second survey was given to high school staff working with high school students with multiple disabilities and had nineteen (19) items. The first fifteen (15) items were questions that required that the answers be entered on a Likert scale. There were four (4) open-ended questions.

The last item on both surveys was a question asking whether the participant would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview regarding effectiveness of transition programming and barriers to effective transitioning for their students with multiple disabilities. The survey also listed the researcher's telephone number.

#### Administration of First Survey

The first survey was sent out to special education school administrators in the third week of June in 1992. Special education administrators in Lake, Cook, and DuPage counties were contacted by phone. They were asked if their staff could participate in a survey regarding transition practices for their eighth grade students with multiple disabilities. Sixty-two (62) surveys were sent out by United States mail. Each packet contained the number of surveys and stamped return envelopes that each special education administrator stated would be needed to give to their staff members working with students with multiple disabilities. The surveys were then mailed to the staff

member's home residences. As a follow-up, each school administrator was called a week after the surveys were sent out to confirm that staff members had been given their surveys.

### Implementation of First Interview

At the end of the survey was a question to participants indicating their willingness to participate in a follow-up interview regarding their current transition practices. Participants that indicated a willingness to participate in the follow-up interview included their name and telephone number. Attempts were made to contact all participants that indicated a willingness to participate in the interview.

The first interview participants were contacted by telephone during the months of September and October, 1992. They were asked if they were employed by a district special education program or special education cooperative program. They were also asked about specific transition activities that they felt were effective for their eighth grade students with multiple disabilities that graduated the previous spring. They were also asked what barriers they encountered. There was also an opportunity for participants to discuss their concerns and comments. Interview participants' comments were documented. The length of each interview was recorded.



### Administration of Second Survey

The second survey was sent out to special education administrators in the first week of October, 1992. The same special education districts and cooperatives that were contacted for the first survey were recontacted to have their high school staff complete the second survey. Fifty-nine (59) surveys were sent out by United States mail. Each packet contained the number of surveys and stamped return envelopes that each special education administrator stated that they would need for their staff working with first year high school students with multiple disabilities. The surveys were sent to their staff home residence. A follow-up phone call was made to the special education administrators to verify that the surveys were sent out.

### Implementation of Second Interview

At the end of the second survey was a question to participants indicating their willingness to participate in a follow-up interview regarding their current transition practices. As with the first interview, participants that indicated a willingness to participate in the follow-up interview included their name and telephone number. Attempts were made to contact all participants that indicated a willingness to participate in the interview.

The second survey interview participants were contacted by telephone during the months of January and February, 1993. They were asked if they were employed by a district

special education program or special education cooperative program. They were also asked about specific transition activities that they felt were effective for their eighth grade students with multiple disabilities that graduated the previous spring. They were also asked what barriers they encountered. There was also an opportunity for participants to discuss their concerns and comments. Interview participants' comments were documented. The length of each interview was recorded.

#### Method of Recording Results

The survey responses were recorded and totaled. The demographics were presented in tabular form and in simple percentages for each item. The survey responses on the Likert-scale items were summarized and percentages were given for each. Data analyses were performed on Likert-scale items from both surveys. Statistical analyses were performed using the statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-X). The responses to the open-ended questions were categorized and reported in frequency distributions. The number of participants willing to participate in a follow-up interview were totaled and recorded. The number of participants interviewed for the first and second surveys were totaled and recorded. The interview participants' comments were recorded, categorized, and reported in frequency distributions.

### Survey Returns and Occurrence of Interviews

The completed and returned first surveys were accepted until August 31, 1992. The survey was mailed to fifteen (15) special education cooperatives and school districts. Sixty-two (62) surveys were sent out. Twenty-three (23) surveys were returned. The rate of return of the first survey was 37.10 percent. For the first survey, sixteen (16) participants indicated a willingness to participate in a follow-up survey. Five (5) participants were interviewed and responses recorded. The interviews were completed during the months of September and October, 1992.

The completed and returned school surveys were accepted until January 31, 1993. The second survey was mailed to twelve (12) special education cooperatives and school districts. Fifty-nine (59) surveys were sent out. Twenty-three (23) surveys were returned. The rate of return of the second survey was 38.98 percent. For the second survey, five (5) participants indicated a willingness to participate in a follow-up survey. Five (5) participants were interviewed and responses recorded. The interviews were completed during the months of January and February, 1993.

### Summary

The first method of collecting the data for this study was by means of a survey. This instrument was designed by the researcher and pilot tested by a special education administrator, elementary school principal, special

education teacher, and public agency special education consultant. It was distributed to receiving special education administrators that agreed to distribute the survey to their staff.

The surveys were designed to collect information about the transition practices for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities, prior to attending high school. The surveys presented Likert-scale items. The Likert-scale items were summarized and percentage given. Statistical analysis was completed on each item of both surveys to determine statistical significance. Statistical analysis was also completed comparing eighth grade staff of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities opinions of effective transition practices; and high school staff working with freshmen students with multiple disabilities opinions of effective transition practices. Barriers to effective transition to high school were also documented. The survey also had open-ended questions to allow participants to describe specific activities that have been effective transition practices, and addressed barriers to effective transitions to high school. Open-ended survey results were recorded and categorized and reported in frequency distributions.

The second method of collecting data was by means of an interview. Interviews were conducted to gather additional information on effective practices and barriers. Interview

responses were categorized and reported in frequency distributions.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

#### Introduction

All children may experience difficulties when there is change in their lives. These difficulties could occur as a result of going to a new school or having a new teacher. More specifically, students with multiple disabilities may experience regression in skills when they experience any significant changes in their lives.

Individual transition practices and activities may effectively minimize these difficulties and regression of skills. There are also barriers to effective transitions of students with multiple disabilities. The review of related literature, described in chapter two, indicated the important components of transitioning children with disabilities to new schools and programs. The studies stressed the importance of planning, communication, and parental involvement. Student skills in sending and receiving environments were also addressed. Several studies indicated timelines and activities that would facilitate effective transitions.

Many school districts have developed transition models and manuals for students with disabilities. Transition

activities may vary depending on the age of the student, their disability, the type of service provided, and local resources. Effective components of transition were noted to be planning and communication. This needs to include key people, such as parents, staff, and the student. This group makes decisions regarding placement, transition activities and timelines. Other studies noted that it was also important to monitor the effectiveness of the current program.

### Review of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to compare and analyze the transition models and activities of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. Surveys and interviews were conducted with eighth grade staff and receiving high school staff of freshmen students with multiple disabilities.

The objective of this chapter was to present and analyze the compiled data obtained from the surveys and interviews. Implications of the findings were cited and discussed. The survey and interviews were related to the research questions.

The study was analyzed as objectively as possible. All efforts were made to eliminate "experimenter bias". It should be noted that the researcher is special education coordinator and that the data that is presented is based on data provided by the participants and not from previous

knowledge. All comments gathered from the surveys and interviews were included. The study was an intent to describe current practices in regards to transitioning eighth grade students with multiple disabilities to high school. Effective practices and barriers were discussed and described. This information could assist in effective transition of this specific student population.

Demographic information was totaled for survey participants and of the interview participants. Percentages and tallies of demographic information was given for each survey. Appropriate tables were utilized in this chapter to efficiently exhibit the findings. The next section of the surveys used Likert scaled items. Statistical analyses were conducted and are presented for each Likert-scale item for each survey. The Likert-scale raw scores of the responses were totaled by frequency of responses; percentage of responses and statistical significance; were listed in tabular form. The responses of both surveys were also statistically analyzed and compared to determine significant agreements and disagreements. The last section of the survey used open-ended items. The open-ended responses to the surveys were studied, categorized, and analyzed in further discussion. Interview responses were also tallied, categorized, and given percentages. These responses were also displayed in tabular form, and analyzed in further discussion.



### Research Questions

This study had two research questions regarding transition practices of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school.

1. What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?

2. What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?

These research questions were answered through the analysis of the data.

### Analysis of First Survey Data

Demographically the survey was sent to special education administrators in Cook, DuPage, and Lake counties in Illinois that had agreed to have their staff participate in the survey. Sixty-two (62) surveys were sent out and twenty-three (23) surveys were returned. The rate of return of the first survey was 37.10 percent. The first section of the survey requested demographic information. The participants were requested to list grade level of their students, current position, and number of years in this position.

Demographics were totaled and are summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1  
SURVEY ONE - DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Item	Information	Totals	
1	Grade level of students	23	Junior grade students
2	Position	19	Teachers
		2	Coordinators
		2	Speech Pathologists

All of the participants were staff members working with eighth grade students with multiple disabilities. A significant majority of the participants were teachers.

The mean number of years that the staff was in current position was 7.21 years. The median number of years in current position was 5.00 years.

#### Results of First Survey Likert-Scale Items

The first survey results were compiled using descriptive statistics. The first survey had fourteen (14) items on a Likert scale. Each item was listed by frequency and percentage. A chi-square analysis was conducted for each item with degree of freedom to 1.00 and goodness to fit. This was done to determine whether the difference between agree and disagree was not by random chance. The data was collapsed into two categories (agree and disagree) and performing chi-square analyses to determine if there were significant differences between middle school staff.

The chi-square analysis was only included on items that had statistically significant agreement. The item responses are listed in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
SCORES OF THE RESPONSES TO SURVEY ITEMS  
LIKERT-SCALE RESPONSES

---

1 = Strongly agree    2 = Agree    3 = Disagree  
4 = Strongly disagree    5 = Don't know

---

1. Procedures for transitioning students from elementary to high school are in place and implemented.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	6	9	5	2	1
%	26.08	39.13	21.74	8.7	4.35

**No differences.**

2. Staff of the receiving schools attend individualized education plan (IEP) conferences for eighth grade students.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	8	6	2	5	2
%	34.8	26.1	8.7	21.7	8.7

**No differences.**

3. Staff of the receiving schools present overview of programs and services to parents of incoming freshman with multiple disabilities.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	8	8	1	3	2
%	36.36	36.36	4.5	13.64	9.09

**$\chi^2 = 7.2$ ,  $p = .0007$ ; Agree more than disagree.**

TABLE 2  
(continued)

4. Staff of receiving schools visit classes of incoming freshman prior to IEP meetings.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	2	7	7	6	1
%	8.7	30.4	30.4	26.1	4.3

$\chi^2 = 8.05$ ,  $p = .005$ ; Agree more than disagree.

5. Parents visit high school classes prior to IEP meetings.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	3	8	5	5	2
%	13.04	34.78	21.74	21.74	8.7

No differences.

6. Incoming freshman make at least one visit to new school/class during their eighth grade year.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	11	5	1	3	2
%	47.8	21.7	4.3	13	8.7

$\chi^2 = 7.2$ ,  $p = .007$ ; Agree more than disagree.

7. Current staff members have release time to accompany students to new school/class.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	9	8	2	2	2
%	39.1	34.8	8.7	8.7	8.7

No differences.

8. Incoming freshmen with disabilities attend summer school at high school, if appropriate.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	6	9	3	2	3
%	26.1	39.1	13	8.7	13

$\chi^2 = 5.00$ ,  $p = .025$ ; Agree more than disagree..

TABLE 2  
(continued)

9. The unique communication systems of incoming freshman are described and understood by high school staff.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	5	10	1	2	5
%	21.7	43.5	4.3	8.7	21.7

$\chi^2 = 8.0$ ,  $p = .005$ ; Agree more than disagree.

10. The unique behavior programs of incoming freshman are described and understood by high school staff.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	5	14	2	3	3
%	18.52	51.85	7.4	11.11	11.11

$\chi^2 = 7.2$ ,  $p = .007$ ; Agree more than disagree.

11. The unique equipment needs (wheelchairs, adaptive equipment) of incoming freshman are described and understood by high school staff.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	9	8	2	3	5
%	33.33	29.63	7.4	11.11	18.52

$\chi^2 = 5.56$ ,  $p = .018$ ; Agree more than disagree.

12. There is a continuing curriculum, with linear scope and sequence, from the elementary to the high school.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	4	9	3	4	3
%	17.39	39.13	13.04	17.39	13.04

No differences.

13. High school communicates with sending staff, after the student has been attending the high school program.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	1	3	8	8	3
%	4.3	13.0	34.8	34.8	13.0

$\chi^2 = 7.2$ ,  $p = .007$ ; Agree more than disagree.

TABLE 2  
(continued)

14. Parents are active participants in planning their child's transition to the high school.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	3	10	5	4	1
%	13.04	43.48	21.74	17.39	4.35

**No differences.**

The first survey had fourteen (14) Likert-scale items. Thirteen of the fourteen items had participants' responses in the strongly agree and agree category. Item number thirteen, "High school staff communicates with sending staff, after the student has been attending the high school program" was the only item that was in the strongly disagree and disagree category. There was significant statistical agreement on items: 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13. This indicated that these items' results were not due to random chance.

#### Survey One Likert Scale: Responses to Research Question 1

The first research question asked, "What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" The participants strongly agreed and had significant statistical agreement on two items. These two items were: item number six, "Incoming freshmen make at least one visit to new school/class during their eighth grade year"; and item number eleven, "The unique equipment

needs (wheelchairs, adaptive equipment) of incoming freshmen are described and understood by high school staff." The participants indicated that the staff and students participated in these effective transition practices.

There was agreement and statistically significant agreement on three items. These three items were: item number eight, "Incoming freshmen with disabilities attend summer school at high school, if appropriate"; item number nine, "The unique communication systems of incoming freshmen are described and understood by high school staff"; and item number ten, "The unique behavior programs of incoming freshmen are described and understood by high school staff." The participants indicated that the staff and students participated in these effective transition practices.

#### Survey One Likert Scale: Responses to Research Question 2

The second research question was, "What barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities?" One item had the majority of the participants in strong disagreement and disagreement and had statistically significant agreement. This was item number thirteen, "High school communicates with sending staff, after the student has been attending the high school program." The participants indicated that the staff and students do not participate in this effective transition practice, and this may be a barrier to effective transitioning of eighth grade students with multiple

disabilities prior to attending high school.

### Qualitative Data

The next section of this first survey had four (4) open-ended questions. The responses were tallied, grouped, and presented in frequency. The responses to question one are reported in Table 3.

There were sixty-seven (67) responses to the first question. The responses were categorized into four areas: 1. visits/observations, 2. meetings, 3. student information, and 4. communication. The most frequently marked responses with twenty-seven (27) out of sixty-seven (67) responses, was the meetings category. The items most frequently noted was that high school staff attend annual review and IEP meetings prior to attending high school. Eight (8) items were indicated as teacher to teacher meetings. These meetings did not include parents. Thirteen (13) out of sixty-seven (67) responses were categorized as communication. Five (5) of the communication items referred to communication between therapists. Speech pathologists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists communicated about the students' unique speech and motor abilities, and other needs. Other communication items varied as phone calls, progress reports/notes, and interviews with student.



TABLE 3

## FREQUENCY OF REPORTED ANSWERS TO SURVEY ONE, QUESTION 1

---

1. Describe the methods by which information on elementary students' abilities and special needs are articulated to the receiving high school. Be specific.

---

Categories	Frequency
<u>Visits/Observations</u>	
to high school by elementary staff	6
to high school by students	5
observation in elementary school	4
to high school by parents	1
high school staff make student	
<u>Meetings</u>	
annual review/IEP meetings	17
teacher to teacher meetings	8
informal meetings among staff	2
<u>Student Information</u>	
cum/student files sent	7
copies of IEP sent	1
<u>Communication</u>	
between therapies	5
progress reports	2
lists of equipment shared	1
notes mailed to parents	1
phone calls to receiving staff	
notebook sent to high school	1
narrative	1
interviews with student	1
notes sent to junior high staff	1

\*N = 67

---

\*Responses vary with some participants providing a number of answers. All twenty-three (23) participants responded to question one (1).

Survey One, Question 1: Response to Research Questions

Research Question One, "What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" Effective practices was indicated by the high frequency of responses to communication and meetings with the elementary and high school staff, parents and students. There were no barriers indicated in question one.

The second question that the participants were asked and their responses are reported in Table 4.

There were forty-five (45) responses to the second question. The responses were categorized into four areas: 1. student, 2. staff, 3. parents, and 4. curriculum. The most frequently indicated response, with seventeen (17) out of forty-five (45) responses, was the student visits the high school prior to graduation. There were five out of forty-five (45) responses indicating that the students attend summer school at the high school. The students also participated in a variety of other activities prior to attending high school. Students attended high school functions, orientation programs, and participated in IEP meetings.

TABLE 4

## FREQUENCY OF REPORTED ANSWERS TO SURVEY ONE, QUESTION 2

---

2. Describe effective activities and components of transition programs in which students participate prior to attending high school. Be specific.

---

Categories	Frequency
<u>Student</u>	
Visit to high school	17
Attends summer school at the high school	5
Sitting in on high school classes	3
Attends school functions	3
Attends orientation programs	2
High school students talk to eighth grade students	1
Vocational evaluation	1
<u>Staff</u>	
Common staff follow student to high school	1
Observes high school program	1
Call student in August to wish them well	1
Observations assisted with own classroom teaching	1
Notes given to staff	1
Discuss/develop transition process through IEP meeting	1
High school does not know who will be the students' teachers in the fall	1
<u>Parents</u>	
Attend orientation programs	1
Parent night at the high school	1
<u>Curriculum</u>	
Pre-vocational, community, domestic, and recreation/leisure begin to stress more independence and "teen-age" activities	1
	N=45
<u>Not sure</u>	1
<u>Blank/No responses</u>	4

---

Seven (7) out of forty-five (45) responses involved staff. Six (6) out of the seven (7) comments referred to effective activities, such as observations and phone calls. One response indicated a barrier to effective transitioning. "High school does not know who will be the student's teacher until the fall."

Two (2) out of the forty-five (45) responses indicated effective transition activities in the parent category. These two responses described parent participating in orientation programs and parent night at the high school. There was one curriculum comment, which referred to activities that are more geared toward teen-age students.

#### Survey One, Question 2: Response to Research Questions

The first research question was "What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" Forty-six (46) out of the forty-seven (47) responses referred to effective transition practices. Student activities were most frequently noted.

The second research question was "What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" There was one response that indicated a barrier to effective transitioning. This was indicated in the high school staff not knowing who the student's teacher would be. A result of this could be that the receiving teacher would not be at the

IEP meeting prior to the student attending the high school. Also, the receiving teacher would not have made a visit to the elementary school to see the eighth grade student. Additionally, the high school staff member may not be familiar with the elementary curriculum.

The responses to question three are tallied, grouped, and presented in frequency in Table 5.

TABLE 5

## FREQUENCY OF REPORTED ANSWERS TO SURVEY ONE, QUESTION 3

---

3. Describe, if any, barriers you have encountered when transitioning your eighth grade students to high school.	
<hr/>	
Categories	Frequency
<hr/>	
<u>Communication</u>	
High schools feel they no longer have time for parent communication	1
Lack of feedback on students after they have entered high school	1
Some of the high schools do not learn about the incoming freshmen prior to staffings	1
Unwillingness of receiving staff to participate in sharing of data from current placement staff	1
<u>Curriculum</u>	
Programs from each school are not truly integrated with each other	1
<u>Student Issues</u>	
Students have a hard time adjusting because of the new environment	1
Students have more time on their hands	1
On occasion, students have been misplaced in high school, because the high school looks only at scores, not the world child	1
Some schools are reluctant to have the student visit and go through a regular day	1

TABLE 5  
(continued)

Parents

Fears from parents because their child would be in a building with many "normal" children	1
---	---

Staff

Sometimes the high school staff doesn't follow our recommendations and students start from scratch on computer techniques and so on	1
---	---

High school staff aren't very receptive, regular education high school staff not wanting special education kids in their classes	1
--	---

Teachers' requests being ignored by administrators for the students to visit their school before the end of the eighth grade school year	1
--	---

Unwillingness of receiving school to allow staff time to participate in informal or formal meetings discussing the student	1
--	---

Scheduling, transportation and man-power are always obstacles	1
---	---

N=15

<u>No barriers encountered</u>	1
--------------------------------	---

<u>Blank/No response</u>	15
--------------------------	----

---

There were fifteen (15) responses to question three.

The responses were categorized in five areas:

1. communication, 2. curriculum, 3. student issues,
4. parents, and 5. staff.

The staff category had five responses. Eighth grade staff members indicated that high school staff sometimes didn't follow their recommendations and weren't receptive to having special education students in regular education classes at the high school. There were three comments in regards to unwillingness of receiving school to allow staff time to participate in meetings to discuss the student.

The communication category had four items. The comments indicated a lack of receiving staff communication with elementary staff prior, during, and after the students attend high school. There were four comments regarding student issues. The barriers included some schools' reluctance to having student visit the high school. Other barriers included students misplaced and others having a hard time adjusting to the new environment. There was one comment in the area of curriculum. It stated that the programs from each school are not truly integrated with each other. There was one parent comment, that parents fear that their child will be in an environment with non-handicapped children.

#### Survey One, Question 3: Response to Research Questions

The second research question was "What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" Barriers included communication difficulties. There was a lack of receiving schools communicating with elementary staff prior to, during, and after the student attends the high school. The elementary staff also indicated that the high school didn't follow their recommendations and weren't receptive to having special education students in regular education at the high school. Other barriers included were some schools not having the students visit the high school. It was noted that one barrier is that the curriculum is not

fully integrated with the high school.

The fourth question was tallied, grouped, and presented in frequency. The responses were reported in Table 6.

TABLE 6

FREQUENCY OF REPORTED ANSWERS TO SURVEY ONE, QUESTION 4

4. Please add any additional information or comments regarding transition of students with special needs to high school.	
Categories	Frequency
<u>Curriculum</u>	
Should be developed between all teachers from primary to high school	1
It is very important to discuss vocation/ occupational training and to be, or have an evaluation completed as soon as possible. Students should have work experiences in high school, even if they are college bound	1
<u>Students</u>	
Students should have opportunity and strong encouragement to attend summer school at the high school	1
I feel it is good for the child to move on, if the program he is entering will help	1
In general, we attempt to tailor our transition to each individual student as they require a varying amount of support	1
There is really no structured transition other than summer program. Many students experience a great deal of anxiety as a result	3
<u>Communication</u>	
IEP planning needs to be coordinated	1
Good rapport between junior highs and high school staffs are important and have been developed over the years	1
More collaboration with old and new staff is necessary	1
Transition periods I have experienced working in a cooperative seem unorganized and unequal	



TABLE 6  
(continued)

Communication (continued)

Some schools/staff thoroughly prepare, involve students and parents and work with receiving school. Others communicate only through official IEP documents and student personal files.	1
--	---

Parents

Need to be more involved. Some visit the high school programs, but many do not.	1
---	---

Parents need to be made aware of the differences between elementary and junior high and high school programming as far as integration. As students get older, the differences between individuals become more pronounced-even between regular education students. Integration is still possible of course, but becomes more difficult.	1
--	---

It has been my experience that the transition into high school is "difficult" for parents. Therefore it is important to get involved in the process at the beginning of their child's eighth grade year	1 N=15
---	-----------

<u>Blank/No response</u>	13
--------------------------	----

---

There were fifteen (15) responses to question four. There were four categories: 1. curriculum, 2. students, 3. communication, and 4. parents.

Two responses were in the curriculum category. It was indicated that a curriculum should be developed from the primary to the high school. It was also indicated that vocational education should begin as soon as possible. In the student category, there were six (6) responses. Three (3) of the responses indicated that there was no structured transition plan other than summer school. Another comment

also recommended that the students attend summer school.

There were four (4) responses in the communication area. It was indicated that there needs to be better coordination of IEP meetings and collaboration between two staffs. Another response commented on the lack of organization and inequity of transition planning.

One effective response was that good rapport has developed between the junior high and high school over the years. Three (3) out of fifteen (15) responses to question four regarded parents. It was indicated that parents need to be more involved; need to be made aware of overall differences between the elementary and high school. It was also indicated that the transition to the high school is "difficult" for parents.

#### Survey One, Question 4: Response to Research Questions

Research question one was "What are the effective components of effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" The responses to question four that indicated effective practices and activities were indicated in one response. "In general, we attempt to tailor our transition to each student as they require a varying amount of support." The second comment on effective practices and activities was "good rapport between junior high and high school staff are important and have been developed over the years."

The second research question was "What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students prior to attending high school?" The responses to question four had thirteen (13) responses indicating barriers to effective transitions. They indicated a need for curriculum on a continuum between the two schools, increased opportunities and encouragement for the students to attend summer school. There needs to be increased and more effective communication among junior high and high school staff. Transition planning needs to be more organized and equitable.

#### First Survey Interviews

On the last section of the survey, participants indicated whether they would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview regarding the effectiveness of transition planning and barriers to effective transition planning for their students with multiple disabilities. Twenty-three (23) surveys were returned. Fifteen (15) participants indicated a willingness to be interviewed. They included their name and phone number. Attempts were made to contact all participants indicating a willingness to be interviewed. Six (6) participants were interviewed.

Analysis of First Interview Data

Interviews were conducted as a follow-up to the survey. Six (6) staff members of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities were interviewed. The demographics of the interview participants are listed in Table 7.

TABLE 7

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF FIRST INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Position	Frequency
Teacher	5
Speech/Language Pathologist	1

Special education programs can belong to special education cooperatives or a school district. The interview participants were asked if they belonged to a cooperative or school district. This information is listed in Table 8.

TABLE 8

FREQUENCY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT/  
COOPERATIVES OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Categories	Frequency
Special Education Cooperative Classroom/Program	5
Special Education School District Program	1

The interview length was timed. The range of the interview length was from nine (9) minutes to twenty-four (24) minutes. The length of the interviews is listed in Table 9.

TABLE 9  
FREQUENCY OF TIME FOR THE FIRST INTERVIEW

Interview	Length in Minutes
1	9
2	16
3	20
4	24
5	19
6	16
N=6	N=104
Mean=17.33 or about 17 minutes	

The purpose of the interview was for the participants to discuss effective transition practices and barriers of effective transitions for their eighth grade students with multiple disabilities transitioning to high school. Effective practices and barriers were tallied and categorized in Table 10.

TABLE 10  
FREQUENCY OF EFFECTIVE TRANSITION PRACTICES AND  
BARRIERS FROM INTERVIEW ONE

Categories	Frequency
<u>Staff</u>	
Participation in IEP meetings	5
Staff works at both sites	4
Tours/Visits of high school	3
Has contact from high school staff	3
May receive feedback from students	2
Visitations of high school staff to junior high took place before IEP meeting	2
Supervisor supervises both sites	1
Junior high staff meet with parents before IEP meeting to discuss conflicts and goals	1
Junior high staff bring materials to the high school for the students to do during visit	1
Junior high teachers went over pre-transition plans with high school teacher	1
Supportive administrators	1
Teachers call parents to find out how things are going	1
Supervisors of elementary and high school meet monthly to discuss student/program issues	1
All staff go to staff development programs	1
<u>Curriculum</u>	
High school continuation of elementary program	3
Curriculum checklists/guidelines follow the student	1
Junior high asks high school about their curriculum	1
<u>Parents</u>	
Parents visit high school	4
Attend IEP meeting	2
<u>Students</u>	
Visits high school	4
Attends IEP meeting	2
Attend summer school	1
Have a variety of transition plans	1
	N=46

There were six (6) interviews conducted to discuss effective transition practices and barriers to effective transitions for their eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. There were forty-six (46) responses that were categorized. The responses were categorized by: 1. staff, 2. curriculum, 3. parents, and 4. students.

The staff category had twenty-seven (27) responses. Five of the six participants indicated their participation at IEP meetings. Four of the six participants indicated that there are staff members that work at both schools. Tours and visits of the high school and contact from the high school staff was indicated three out of the six interviews. The other twelve responses in the staff category varied from junior high staff going over pre-transition plans with high school staff to teachers calling parents to find out how things are going.

The curriculum category had five responses indicated. Three of the participants indicated that the high school curriculum is a continuation of the elementary program. One responded that the junior high asks the high school about the curriculum. The last comment indicated that there are curriculum checklists/guidelines that follow the student.

The parent category had six responses. Four of the participants indicated that the parents visited the high school. Two participants indicated that the parent attends

IEP meetings. The last category indicated the student activities. Four out of the six participants indicated that the eighth grade students visits the high school. Two participants indicated that the student attends summer school and only one indicated that there were a variety of transition plans.

#### First Survey Interview: Responses to Research Questions

The first research question was "What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students prior to attending high school?" Effective transition practices and activities were indicated in the six interviews. Frequently noted practices and activities were: staff participation at IEP meetings, parents visit high school, students visit high school, and staff works at both schools. Half of the participants indicated that eighth grade staff visit high school; high school staff visits junior high school; and that the curriculum is a continuation of the elementary program. Other responses indicated a variety of other activities the staff participates in such as teachers calling parents to find out how things are going; and junior high school teachers going over pre-transition plans with high school staff.

The second research question was "What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" Although there were no barriers tallied, the lack of mention



of the low frequency of transition activities and practices noted, may indicate possible barriers to effective transitions. The student attending IEP meeting was only indicated two out of six interviews. The student attends summer school was only indicated one time. It was only indicated once that there are a variety of transition plans. To be effective, this item should have been indicated in higher frequency. Supportive administrators was only mentioned once. It can only be implied that what the other participants felt about the level of administrative support.

#### Analysis of Second Survey Data

Demographically, the second survey was sent to special education administrators in Cook, DuPage, and Lake counties in Illinois, that had agreed to have their staff participate in the survey. The administrators received the appropriate number of surveys that they requested. Each survey consisted of a cover letter, discussing the nature of the survey; request of demographic information; Likert-scale items; and open-ended items. A stamped return envelope was enclosed with each survey. The special education administrators distributed the surveys to their appropriate staff member working with freshmen students with multiple disabilities.

The second survey was given to the receiving high school staff in the fall of 1992. These were the staff members of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities

that had graduated in the spring of 1992. The students were in their freshmen year of high school. Fifty-nine (59) surveys were sent out and twenty-three (23) were returned. The rate of survey return was 38.98 percent.

The first section of the survey requested demographic information. The participants were requested to list grade level of students, current position, and number of years in this position. This information is listed in Table 11.

TABLE 11  
SURVEY TWO - DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Item	Information	Totals	
1	Grade level of students	21	High School teachers
		2	left blank
2	Position	16	Teachers
		3	Speech Pathologists
		1	Psychologist
		3	left blank

The mean number of years in current position was 6.1 years. The median number of years in current position was 6.0 years.

#### Results of the Second Survey Likert-Scale Items

The second survey results were compiled using descriptive statistics. The second survey had fifteen (15) items on a Likert-scale. Each item is listed by frequency and percentage. Not all survey items were answered by the

participants. A chi-square analysis was conducted for each item with degree of freedom to 1.00 and goodness to fit. This was done to determine whether the difference between agree and disagree was not by random chance. The data was collapsed into two categories (agree and disagree) and performing chi-square analyses to determine if there were significant differences between high school staff. The chi-square analysis was only included on items that had statistically significant agreement. The item responses are listed in Table 12.

TABLE 12  
SCORES OF THE RESPONSES TO SURVEY ITEMS  
LIKERT-SCALE RESPONSES

---

1 = Strongly agree    2 = Agree    3 = Disagree  
4 = Strongly disagree    5 = Don't know

---

1. Procedures for transitioning students from elementary to high school are in place and implemented.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	4	14	2	2	0
%	18.2	63.6	9.1	9.1	0

**$\chi^2 = 8.91, p = .0028$ ; Agree more than disagree.**

2. High school staff attended Individual Education Plan (IEP) conferences prior to attending their students attending their classes.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	8	9	2	3	0
%	36.4	40.9	9.1	13.6	0

**$\chi^2 = 8.40, p = .004$ ; Agree more than disagree.**

TABLE 12  
(continued)

3. High school staff presented an overview of programs and services prior to eighth grade completion.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	7	8	4	3	1
%	30.4	34.8	17.4	13.0	4.3

$\chi^2 = 7.2$ ,  $p = .007$ ; Agree more than disagree.

4. Staff of receiving schools visited classes of incoming freshman prior to transition IEP meetings.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	0	5	9	4	2
%	0	25.0	45.0	20.0	10.0

No differences.

5. Parents visit high school classes prior to transition IEP meetings.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	3	10	6	1	1
%	14.3	47.6	28.6	4.8	4.8

No differences.

6. Incoming freshman made at least one visit to new school/class during their eighth grade year.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	11	6	3	1	0
%	52.4	28.6	14.3	4.8	0

$\chi^2 = 8.05$ ,  $p = .005$ ; Agree more than disagree.

7. Staff from sending elementary school accompanied students to new school prior to graduation.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	10	3	4	2	1
%	50.0	15.0	20	10.0	5.0

No differences.

TABLE 12  
(continued)

8. Incoming freshmen with disabilities attend summer school at high school.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	4	6	5	3	2
%	19	28.6	23.8	19	9.5

**No differences.**

9. The unique communication systems of freshmen students were described to and understood by high school staff.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	8	6	3	3	1
%	38.1	28.6	14.3	14.3	4.8

**No differences.**

10. The unique behavior programs of freshmen students were described to and understood by high school staff.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	4	10	3	3	1
%	19.0	47.6	14.3	14.3	4.8

**No differences.**

11. The unique equipment needs (wheelchairs, adaptive equipment) of freshman students were described to and understood by high school staff.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	4	10	4	4	0
%	18.2	45.5	18.2	18.2	0

**No differences.**

12. There is a continuing curriculum, with linear scope and sequence, from the elementary to the high school.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	7	10	1	1	1
%	35.0	50.0	5.0	5.0	5.0

$\chi^2 = 11.84$ ,  $p = .0006$ ; Agree more than disagree.

TABLE 12  
(continued)

13. Elementary staff has made clear that they are available to discuss student issues/concerns with high school staff during the following year.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	3	7	4	1	1
%	18.8	43.8	25	6.3	6.3

**No differences.**

14. High school staff has communicated with elementary school staff after the student graduated from elementary school.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	3	10	4	1	2
%	15.0	50.0	20.0	5.0	10.0

**$\chi^2 = 8.05$ ,  $p = .005$ ; Agree more than disagree.**

15. Parents actively participated in planning their child's transition to the high school.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	4	13	3	1	0
%	19.0	61.9	14.3	4.8	0

**No differences.**

The second survey had fifteen (15) Likert-scale items. All items except for one, had responses in the strongly agree and agree category. Item number four, "Staff from receiving high school visited classes to incoming freshmen prior to transition IEP meeting," was in the disagree category. Statistically significant agreement was on item numbers: 1, 2, 3, 6, 12, and 14.

There was one item that there was strong agreement and significant statistically agreement. This was item number

six, "Incoming freshmen made at least one visit to new school/class during their eighth grade year." There were five items that were in the agreement category and were statistically significant. These items were numbers 1, 2, 3, 12, and 14. The categories addressed high school staff attended IEP meetings prior to student attending the high school and presented an overview of programs and services.

#### Survey Two Likert Scale: Response to Research Questions

Research question one asked, "What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" The responses indicated in survey two that: incoming freshmen visited the high school during their eighth grade year; procedures for transitioning students with multiple disabilities from elementary school to high school; high school staff attended IEP meetings prior to students attending high school; high school staff presented overviews of programs and services; there is a continuing curriculum for the elementary to the high school and high school staff communicated with elementary school staff after the student graduated from the elementary school. Student and staff participated in these activities. These items were viewed as effective transition activities in the related literature discussed in chapter two.

The second research question was "What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students

with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" There were no items that were statistically significant for the disagree and strongly disagree category. One item stated that the high school staff disagreed that the staff of receiving high school visited classes of incoming freshmen prior to transition meeting. One barrier to effective transitioning would be the lack of knowledge of the eighth grade student's unique abilities, challenges, and specialized equipment. The high school staff could have difficulty making recommendations at the IEP meeting, without visiting the classroom and students, prior to the IEP transition meeting.

#### Qualitative Data

The next section of the second survey had four (4) open-ended questions. The responses were tallied, grouped, and presented in frequency. The responses to question one are reported in Table 13.



TABLE 13

## FREQUENCY OF REPORTED ANSWERS TO SURVEY TWO, QUESTION 1

---

1. Describe how information on elementary students' abilities and special needs were articulated from the elementary school. Be specific.

---

Category	Frequency
<u>Meetings</u>	
IEP meetings	6
High school staff met with junior high teachers to review goals, behaviors, and special needs of students	5
In the fall, before classes started with high school teachers, support staff and parents	1
Pre-registration with counselor	1
<u>Visits</u>	
To grade school by high school teacher	1
<u>Communication</u>	
Phone calls	4
We are in the process of improving our communication system	1
Through parents and teachers	1
Informal contact between staffs	1
<u>Student Information</u>	
IEP files/records/cum files	8
Curriculum binders which follow the student from class to class	2
Psychological reports and social histories	2
<u>Students</u>	
Modeling from other students when at the high school	1
Students visit for two days	1
	N=35

---

There were thirty-five (35) responses to the first question. The responses were categorized into five areas:

1. meetings, 2. visits, 3. communication, 4. student

information, and 5. students. The most frequently marked response with fourteen (14) out of thirty-five (35) responses, was for student information category. Eight responses indicated that student information came from the IEP files, student records, and cumulative (cum) files. Psychological reports and social history were also means for obtaining student information. Students also had curriculum binders, which followed the student from class to class.

The second most frequently indicated category was meetings. Thirteen (13) out of thirty-five (35) items were in the meetings category. Six (6) participants indicated that information on the students' abilities and special needs came from IEP meetings. Another type of meeting occurred between high school staff and junior high staff, discussing goals, behaviors, and special needs of students. This item was indicated five (5) times.

Communication items were indicated seven (7) times. The information on student abilities and special needs being articulated by phone was indicated four (4) times.

The student category had two responses. One indicated that students model from other students, when at the high school. The other commend was that students visit the high school for two days.

Survey Two, Question 1: Response to Research Questions

Research question one was "What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" Effective components were indicated by high school staff attending IEP meetings; student records sent the high school prior to the eighth grade students' graduation. Communication among the two school districts also occur by calls and meetings with junior high teachers to discuss goals, behaviors, and special needs of students.

The responses to question two are listed in Table 14.

TABLE 14

FREQUENCY OF REPORTED ANSWERS TO SURVEY TWO, QUESTION 2

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2. Describe effective activities and components of transition programs in which students participated prior to attending high school.	
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Categories	Frequency
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---

<u>Students</u>	
Came to high school to visit, met staff, and toured building	10
Attend summer school	2
High school students visited the eighth grade class and discussed differences of schools/courses	1
<u>Curriculum/Activities</u>	
Pictures were taken of various locations at high school and reviewed many times	1
Discussion and role modeling of "appropriate" high school behaviors	1
Same curriculum elements in junior high and high school	1
Start to decide a vocational or academic track	1

TABLE 14  
(continued)

<u>Staff</u>	
High school staff attend the IEP conference	1
Staff from both schools communicate by phone and in person	1
	N=19
<u>Blank/No response</u>	3
<u>Comment</u>	
I don't know what they were	1

---

There were nineteen (19) responses to the second question. The responses were categorized into three (3) categories. The categories were: 1. curriculum/activities, 2. students, and 3. staff. Thirteen (13) responses were in the students' category. Ten (10) responses indicated that the students came to the high school to visit, met staff, and toured the building. Two (2) responses indicated that the eighth grade students attended summer school.

The curriculum/activities category had four (4) responses. The responses described activities such as taking pictures of various locations at the high school to be reviewed with eighth grade students prior to attending high school. The two (2) staff category responses indicated that the high school staff attend IEP meetings and that staff from both school communicated by phone and in person.

### Survey Two, Question 2: Response to Research Questions

The first research question was "What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" Many of the responses indicated that effective practices include students coming to the high school to visit. Various specific activities were described as being effective. One described the students discussing and role modeling of 'appropriate' high school behaviors.

No barriers were indicated from the response items to the second question.

The responses to question three are listed in Table 15.

There were fourteen (14) responses to the third question. The responses were categorized in five areas:

1. students, 2. staff, 3. information/communication,
4. parents, and 5. curriculum.

The students category had four (4) responses. Barriers included students adjusting to the layout of the building the first couple of weeks. The behavior issues of students were indicated. It was also indicated that a barrier occurred when students rely too much on one-to-one assistance.

TABLE 15

## FREQUENCY OF REPORTED ANSWERS TO SURVEY TWO, QUESTION 3

---

3. Describe the barriers you encountered when your students transaudient to high school.

---

Categories	Frequency
<u>Students</u>	
Students adjusting to layout of the building the first couple of weeks	2
Behavioral issues	1
Students rely too much on one to one aides. We try to keep this at a very minimum in preparation for adult life	1
<u>Staff</u>	
Regular education staff not prepared for the variety of disabilities	1
Behavior problems were a problem until staff learned to deal effectively with the student	1
Need for male aide	1
<u>Information/Communication</u>	
Not much specific information on skill level	2
Trying to contact previous teacher and obtaining all the information needed	1
<u>Parents</u>	
Some parents get frustrated when less time is spent on things like reading	1
Need additional parent to teacher contact	1
Unrealistic parent expectation for their child to be mainstreamed	1
<u>Curriculum</u>	
The high school program is community based, where the elementary school focus in on academics	1
	N=14
<u>Blank/No response</u>	7

Almost half of the surveys left this item blank.

---

There were three (3) responses in the staff category. Barriers included staff not knowing to effectively handle student behavior, need for male teacher assistant, and regular education staff not prepared for the variety of disabilities.

The information/communication category had three (3) responses. High school staff members indicated twice, that there wasn't specific information on their students' skill levels. One participant noted difficulty in contacting previous teacher and obtaining all information needed.

The parent category had three responses. The staff indicated that barriers exist with parent understanding of functional versus academic curriculum. Another barrier was the need for increased parent-teacher contact time.

The curriculum category indicated that there were differences in the focus of the high school function based curriculum, where the focus of the elementary school is on academics.

#### Survey Two, Question 3: Response to Research Questions

The second research question was "What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" The third question addressed these barriers. The differences in elementary school curriculum and the high school curriculum (academic versus functional) was considered a barrier to effective transitioning. The

parents expected more academic focus in the high school curriculum. The high school focus was on functional. Elementary schools had a more academic focus. The curriculum was not on a continuum from the elementary to the high school.

Barriers that the students encountered were the difficulty they had in adjusting to the layout of the high school building. High school staff noted that students relied too much on teacher assistants. High school staff also indicated barriers in regular education staff not prepared for the variety of disabilities. The staff also encountered barriers with not receiving much specific information on student skill level.

The responses to question four are listed in Table 16.

There were seven responses to the fourth question. There were three categories: 1. students, 2. staff, and 3. other comments. High school staff indicated twice that the students lacked vocational skills. Staff comments indicated that they didn't know what transition procedures were in place and that related service staff should meet prior to the student attending high school. High school staff noted the need for physical plant accommodations; the need for more time; and that elementary staff should make sure that the students are ready to accept change.



TABLE 16

## FREQUENCY OF REPORTED ANSWERS TO SURVEY TWO, QUESTION 4

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4. Please add any additional information or comments regarding students with special needs transitioning to high school.	
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Categories	Frequency
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---

<u>Students</u>	
Students lack vocational skills	2
<u>Staff</u>	
I don't know what procedures are in place	1
It would be nice if related service from elementary school and the high school could meet prior to the student attending high school	1
<u>Other Comments</u>	
Need physical plant accommodations	1
Make sure the students are ready to accept change	1
Could always used more time	1
	N=7
<u>Blank/No response</u>	12

---

Survey Two, Question 4: Response to Research Questions

The second research question was "What are the barriers to effective transition models of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" The barriers to effective transitions were indicated in the lack of student vocational skill; lack of knowledge of transition procedures; and, the need for related service staff to meet prior to student attending high school. Other barriers noted the need for physical plant accommodations, more time; and, that elementary staff should make sure that the

students are ready to accept change.

### Analysis of Second Interview Data

On the last section of the survey, participants indicated whether they would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview regarding the effectiveness of transition planning and barriers to effective transition planning for their students with multiple disabilities. Twenty-three (23) surveys were returned. Five (5) participants indicated a willingness to be interviewed. They included their name and phone number.

Interviews were conducted as a follow-up activity to the second survey. Five (5) staff members of high school freshmen students with multiple disabilities were interviewed. The demographics of the interview participants are listed in Table 17.

TABLE 17

#### DEMOGRAPHICS INFORMATION OF SECOND INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Position	Frequency
Teacher	5

As with the first survey interviews, the participants were asked if they were employed by a special education cooperative or a school district. This information is listed in Table 18.

TABLE 18  
FREQUENCY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION DISTRICT/COOPERATIVE  
PROGRAMS OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Categories	Frequency
Special education cooperative classroom/program	5
Special education school district program	0

The interview length was timed. The range of the interviews was from fifteen (15) minutes to forty (40) minutes. The length of the interviews is listed in Table 19.

TABLE 19  
FREQUENCY OF TIME FOR THE SECOND INTERVIEWS

Interview	Length in Minutes
1	15
2	24
3	30
4	18
5	40
N=5	N=127
Mean=25.4 or about 25 minutes	

The purpose of the interview was for participants to discuss effective transition practices and barriers of the freshmen students with multiple disabilities that recently transitioned from eighth grade to high school. Effective

practices and barriers were tallied and categorized in Table 20.

TABLE 20  
FREQUENCY OF EFFECTIVE TRANSITION PRACTICES AND  
BARRIERS FROM INTERVIEW TWO

Categories	Frequency
<u>Meetings</u>	
Staff went to the IEP meetings in the spring	4
No high school staff member attends IEP meeting	2
Bi-annual team meetings	1
Administrator attends IEP meetings	1
High school coordinates IEP meeting	1
<u>Visits/Observations</u>	
Parents visited high school	5
Students visited high school	5
Elementary staff came to visit high school	2
Visiting sending schools	2
Staff gets release time to see receiving schools	1
Summer school not at high school, at segregated site	1
Individualized transition plan	1
<u>Parents</u>	
Important to have new parent contact	1
Attend general parent information night	1
Didn't follow through on registration, rely on special education staff to do everything for parents	1
Parents say that transition to current program did not go well	1
Set up Parent Transition Committee	1
Tell parents how difficult things are after student graduates from high school	1
Personal handwritten report does not go to parents	1
Look at high school as fresh start	1

TABLE 20  
(continued)

Staff

Would like to know new student placements/decisions	3
Staff development with elementary schools	2
There is the same related service staff	2
Staff development not done with elementary schools	2
New staff get oriented	1
Junior high school teacher teaches at the high school for the summer	1
Once children are in your classroom, "they're yours"	1
Teachers make suggestions, administrators make ultimate decision	1
Pay a lot of attention to transition	1
Look at ways to predict transition problems	1
Sometimes are short staffed	

Curriculum

Community based instruction	4
Elementary district has functionally based curriculum	2
Integrated process could be modeled	1
Case manager makes adaptations	1
Home school district program instead of cooperative program	1
High school has more vocational education	1
Elementary teachers stress academics	1
No program or curriculum guide	1
Book orders are in June, but class make-up may change	1
Elementary schools has inclusion programs, high schools does not	1

Communication

Information at the end of the school year from administrators	1
Local district contracted teacher with prospective students	1
Student folders go to district office, then go to new school	1
Informal, not systematic	1
Eighty (80) percent of information gets to high school staff. Twenty (20) percent gets lost.	1
Student support team meets regularly	1
Reports are handed to the teacher	1
Used to have articulation meetings with elementary staff	1
No videos	1
Call teacher at the end of the year	1

TABLE 20  
(continued)

<u>Student</u>	
Student attends summer school	4
Each student has an IEP	1
Students frequently ask, "When am I going to new school?"	1
Come from different elementary schools	1
Come to high school having had too much one-to-one	1
Attending home district programs	1
Have individual transition plan	1
Attend summer school, but not at the high school, at segregated site	1
	N=82

---

There were five interviews conducted to discuss effective transition practices and barriers to effective transitioning of the freshmen students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. There were forty-nine (49) responses that were seen as effective practices. The responses were categorized by: 1. meetings, 2. visits/observations, 3. parents, 4. staff, 5. curriculum, 6. communication, and 7. students. Interview responses that indicated effective transition practices and activities in the meeting category included high school staff attended IEP meeting in the spring; high school administrator attends IEP meeting, and the high school coordinated the IEP meeting.

The visits/observation category had the following responses as effective transition practices. All five participants indicated that parents and students visited the high school prior to graduation. Elementary staff visited the high school and the high school staff visited sending

schools. Staff members were given release time to see receiving schools.

High school staff felt that it was important to have new parent contact. Parents attended parent information night and set up a Parent Transition committee. Parents looked at high school as a fresh start for their child.

In the staff category, effective transition activities and practices were indicated when the same related service staff worked at both districts. Staff development occurred with elementary schools and new staff received orientation. An effective practice was indicated when the junior high teachers teaches at the high school for summer school. Two out of the five responses indicated that the high school staff paid a lot of attention to transition and looked for ways to predict transition problems.

In the curriculum category, the high school staff indicated that an effective practice indicated that an effective practice was to have the student attend their home school district's program, instead of a cooperative program.

In the communication category, local school districts contacted teacher with prospective students. Student support teams meet regularly, reports are handed to the teacher, and elementary teachers are called at the end of the year.

Effective practices and activities in the student category were that the student attends summer school;

student attends IEP meeting (indicated once); and that students inquire about when they are transitioning to high school. Another effective component of transition is when the student attends the home school program. One out of five participants indicated that they had individualized transition plans.

Barriers were indicated in thirty-three (33) responses. Two out of the five participants indicated that no high school staff member attended IEP meetings. In the parent category, parents didn't follow through on registration, and relied on staff too much. Parents indicated to high school staff that transitions to current program did not go well. Parents did not receive handwritten reports that go from the elementary school staff to the high school staff.

High school staff indicated barriers such as being short-staffed and lack of knowledge of new student placements and class lists. Staff development does not occur with feeder elementary school districts.

In the curriculum category, barriers were indicated by the different focus of the curriculum. Elementary school programs focus on academics, and the high school curriculum focus is on functional community based instruction. Another barrier is that the elementary school had inclusion programs, but the high school does not.

The communication category addressed the barriers the high school staff had in only receiving information at the



end of the school year from administrators. Other communication barriers indicated that student folders did not go directly to high school staff and that there was no systematic method of communication. One barrier that was indicated was that there used to be articulation meetings with the elementary staff. This practice was not continued.

The student category had one barrier that indicated that the students came from different schools. The high school staff had indicated that the students had been given too much one-to-one attention at the elementary program.

#### Second Survey Interview: Responses to Research Questions

The first research question was "What are the effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" Effective transition practices and activities were indicated by parent and student visits to the high school prior to graduation. It was also effective for sending and receiving school staff to visit each others' programs. Effective transition practices and activities included participation at IEP meetings and team meetings.

Communication by means of reports, phone calls, and with student support teams, facilitated effective transitioning of students. Students having an IEP, attending summer school, attending home school district program, and having an individualized transition plan, were indicators of effective transition planning.

The second research question was "What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" The barriers were indicated in different curriculum focus of the elementary and high school programs. There was no systematic method of communication. Only one participant indicated that there were individualized transition plans. Two out of the five participants did not attend the IEP transition meeting. These indicated barriers to effective transitioning of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities.

#### Quantitative Data of First and Second Surveys

The total participants consisted of forty-six (46) personnel. There were twenty-three (23) eighth grade and twenty-three (23) high school personnel. The majority (35) of the personnel consisted of teachers with the remaining (8) being either support personnel (e.g., speech language pathologist) or coordinators. The years of experience in their current position ranged from one to nineteen years ( $\bar{X}=6.70$ ,  $SD=4.70$ ).

The participants filled out a survey instrument that consisted of fourteen statements (with one additional statement for the high school personnel) describing various models and activities involved in transitioning eighth grade students with multiple disabilities to high school. Participants were asked to rate on a four-point Likert

scaled (1=strongly agree, 4=strong disagree) with five being "Don't know". The survey was distributed to elementary personnel prior to their students entering high school, and to high school personnel after receiving these students.

All statistical analyses were conducted utilizing an experimental alpha level of .05. Several analyses were conducted to determine if differences existed between the elementary school and high school personnel, and among themselves concerning their attitudes towards the transition practices. This analysis consisted of examining if there were differences between the two sets of school personnel. A series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures were conducted on each of the fourteen transition statements which both groups of personnel answered. The only significant difference revealed in these analyses was on question number thirteen dealing with communication of the high school staff with the elementary school staff after the student is enrolled in high school. Elementary school personnel reported that high school staff did not communicate ( $\bar{X}=3.15$ ,  $SD=.875$ ) while high school personnel ( $\bar{X}=2.17$ ,  $SD=.786$ ) tended to report that they did communicate [ $F(1,35)=13.16$ ,  $p=.0009$ ]. The ANOVA of variance is listed in Table 21.

TABLE 21  
ANOVA VARIANCE

Question Number	F	p-Value	
1	(1,42) = .0295	.8646	
2	(1,41) = .3119	.5795	
3	(1,40) = .3343	.5664	
4	(1,38) = .0133	.9089	
5	(1,39) = 1.25	.2695	
6	(1,39) = .0743	.7866	
7	(1,38) = .3851	.5386	
8	(1,37) = 1.72	.1981	
9	(1,36) = .0231	.8801	
10	(1,38) = .4648	.4995	
11	(1,38) = 2.18	.1479	
12	(1,37) = 3.57	.067	
13	(1,36) = 13.16	.009	Significant
14	(1,41) = 2.40	.1291	

The next set of analyses consisted of collapsing data into two categories (agree and disagree) and performing chi-square analyses to determine if there were significant differences between all personnel. The chi-square analysis was only included on items that had statistically significant agreement. The total number of responses, percentages, and significant chi-square analyses is listed for each survey item in Table 22.

TABLE 22  
TOTAL SCORES OF THE RESPONSES TO SURVEY ITEMS  
LIKERT-SCALE RESPONSES AND CHI-SQUARE ANALYSES  
BETWEEN ALL PERSONNEL

---

1 = Strongly agree    2 = Agree    3 = Disagree  
4 = Strongly disagree    5 = Don't know

---

1. Procedures for transitioning students from elementary to high school are in place and implemented.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	10	23	7	4	1
%	22.2	51.1	15.6	8.9	2.2

$\chi^2 = 11.00, p = .0009$ ; Agree more than disagree.

2. High school staff attended Individual Education Plan (IEP) conferences prior to attending their students attending their classes.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	16	15	4	8	2
%	35.6	33.3	8.9	17.8	4.4

$\chi^2 = 8.40, p = .004$ ; Agree more than disagree.

3. High school staff presented an overview of programs and services prior to eighth grade completion.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	15	16	5	6	3
%	33.3	35.6	11.1	13.3	6.7

$\chi^2 = 9.52, p = .002$ ; Agree more than disagree.

4. Staff of receiving high school visited classes of incoming freshmen prior to transition IEP meetings.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	2	12	16	10	3
%	4.7	27.9	37.2	23.3	7.0

$\chi^2 = 10.00, p = .002$ ; Agree more than disagree.

TABLE 22  
(continued)

5. Parents visit high school classes prior to transition IEP meetings.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	6	18	11	6	3
%	13.6	40.9	25.0	13.6	6.8

**No differences.**

6. Incoming freshmen made at least one visit to new school/class during their eighth grade year.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	22	11	4	4	2
%	51.2	25.6	9.3	9.3	4.7

$\chi^2 = 15.24$ ,  $p = .0001$ ; Agree more than disagree.

7. Staff from sending elementary school accompanied students to new school prior to graduation.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	19	11	6	4	3
%	44.2	25.6	14.0	9.3	7.0

**No differences.**

8. Incoming freshmen with disabilities attended summer school at high school, if appropriate.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	10	15	8	6	5
%	22.7	34.1	18.2	13.6	11.4

**No differences.**

9. The unique communication systems of freshmen students were described to and understood by high school staff.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	13	16	4	5	6
%	29.5	36.4	9.1	11.4	13.6

$\chi^2 = 10.53$ ,  $p = .001$ ; Agree more than disagree.

TABLE 22  
(continued)

10. The unique behavior programs of freshmen students were described to and understood by high school staff.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	9	21	5	5	4
%	20.5	47.7	11.4	11.4	9.1

$\chi^2 = 10.00$ ,  $p = .002$ ; Agree more than disagree.

11. The unique equipment needs (wheelchairs, adaptive equipment) of freshmen students were described to and understood by high school staff.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	12	16	6	6	5
%	26.7	35.6	13.3	13.3	11.1

$\chi^2 = 6.4$ ,  $p = .01$ ; Agree more than disagree.

12. There is a continuing curriculum, with linear scope and sequence, from the elementary to the high school.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	11	19	4	5	4
%	25.6	44.2	9.3	11.6	9.3

$\chi^2 = 11.31$ ,  $p = .0008$ ; Agree more than disagree.

13. High school staff communicates with elementary school staff after the student graduated from elementary school.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	4	13	12	9	5
%	9.3	30.2	27.9	20.9	11.6

No differences.

14. Parents actively participated in planning their child's transition to the high school.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	7	23	8	5	1
%	15.9	52.3	18.2	11.4	2.3

$\chi^2 = 6.72$ ,  $p = .01$ ; Agree more than disagree.

TABLE 22  
(continued)

15. Elementary staff has made clear that they are available to discuss student issues/concerns with high school staff during the following year.

	1	2	3	4	5
N	3	7	4	1	1
%	18.8	43.7	25.0	6.3	6.3

**High school staff only.**

There were ten items that had statistically significant agreement among the elementary and high school staff. There were no items that the elementary and high school staff significantly disagreed on.

First and Second Survey: Summation of  
Research Question 1 Responses

The first research question was "What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" Two sets of surveys and two sets of interviews were conducted to indicate effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities. The survey and interview responses were categorized, tallied, and statistically analyzed. The following activities were frequently indicated as effective components of transition practices.

1. Staff, parents, and students visit and make observation at the high school occur prior to graduation.



2. Receiving high school staff members attend IEP meetings prior to student graduation.
3. Student information and files are sent to the high school prior to the student attending high school.
4. The curriculum is on a continuum from the elementary to the high school.
5. Procedures are in place for transitioning students with multiple disabilities from eighth grade to high school.
6. Staff members have release time to accompany eighth grade students with multiple disabilities to the high school.
7. Incoming freshmen attend summer school at the high school.
8. The unique communication systems, behavior programs, equipment needs of incoming freshmen are described and understood by high school staff.

#### First and Second Survey: Summation of

#### Research Question 2 Responses

The second research question was "What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?" The two sets of surveys and the two sets of interviews indicated the barriers to effective transitioning of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities to the high school. The survey and interview responses were categorized and tallied. The following comments were frequently indicated as barriers to effective transitioning for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities to the high school.

1. There is a lack of an efficient communication system between the eighth grade staff and the high school staff.
2. Curriculum is not on a continuum between the elementary and high schools.
3. Students may have a difficult time adjusting to the high school and may be inappropriately placed.
4. The high school teachers and administrators may not follow eighth grade staff recommendations.
5. IEP planning needs to be coordinated.
6. No transition plan was developed, resulting in students experiencing a great deal of anxiety.
7. Parents need to be more involved in transition planning for their child.

#### Summary of Findings

In summary, the results of this study provided insight into the transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. The components of effective transition models and barriers to effective transitions were indicated. It was frequently reported that the visits to the high school by staff, parents, and students; attendance at IEP meetings; curriculum on a continuum for elementary to high school; and effective communication systems between eighth grade and high school staff are important. It was also significant that the staff of elementary and high school districts have scheduled opportunities for staff development, curriculum integration, and student concerns. It is critical that both staffs have administrative support and are encouraged to work collaboratively and be active participants in their

students' transition plan. Effective transition practices for students with multiple disabilities could minimize the regression of physical, cognitive, sensory, and communication skills. This could significantly minimize the student's ability to maintain current skill level and acquiring new skills and abilities.

The barriers that were indicated were: lack of transition plan for students, lack of curriculum on a continuum, lack of effective communication system between eighth grade and high school staff, and need for increased parent involvement. The student may have difficulty communicating their needs and concerns with receiving staff members that are not familiar with their unique communication systems. Receiving staff members may not be familiar with the students' ability and need to assess the student to determine current functioning levels. Students with multiple disabilities may be difficult to assess and their abilities may be underestimated. It is critical that effective transition practices include communication between sending and receiving staff. This communication and careful transition planning could help eliminate the incidence of students with multiple disabilities regressing and abilities being underestimated.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary of the Research

Transitions may be difficult for all people. They may especially be difficult for people with disabilities. Eighth grade students with multiple disabilities may have a difficult time transitioning to high school. This student population may experience regression when they experience some of the following: a transition to a new school or setting, having a new teacher, or having a new school schedule. The problem is in identifying the effective practices and activities of transitioning eighth grade students with multiple disabilities to high school with minimal regression of skills.

The purpose of the study was to compare transition activities and models of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. Identifying effective transition practices and barriers may result in the students with multiple disabilities experiencing less regression, reducing anxiety, and being more successful in their new setting (school).

### Research Questions

Two research questions were utilized to direct the course of analysis.

1. What are the effective components of transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?

2. What are the barriers to effective transition models for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school?

### Conclusions

The following are conclusions regarding effective transitioning of and barriers to effective transitioning eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending the high school.

1. Effective transitions are a function of developing individual transition plans for eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school.

2. Effective transitions are a function of developing efficient communication systems for eighth grade and high school staff.

3. Effective transitions are a function of a continuum of the curriculum from the elementary through the high school program.

4. Effective transitions are a function of parents being encouraged to participate in IEP and transition planning for their eighth grade children with multiple

disabilities.

5. Effective transitions are a function of eighth grade students and staff visiting and observing the high school prior to graduation.

6. Effective transitions are a function of staff development programs that include eighth grade and high school staff working with students with multiple disabilities.

7. Effective transitions are a function of student files and reports being given to receiving high school prior to the student attending the high school.

8. Effective transitions are a function of constant monitoring and investigation of the practices and activities of transition model; to more effectively transition eighth grade students with disabilities, prior to attending high school.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

The research would recommend the following for future study:

1. A comparative analysis of transition models for students with multiple disabilities in inclusionary programs be considered.

2. A comparative analysis of transition models for students with multiple disabilities with the students as the responding participant be considered.

3. A comparative analysis of transition models for

students with multiple disabilities with the parent of the child as the responding participant be considered.

4. A comparative analysis of transition models for students with multiple disabilities with the middle school and high school administrators as the responding participant be considered.

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## APPENDIX A

June 22, 1992

Dear Educator:

Your input is an integral part of a study on transition planning of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school.

I am in the process of writing my doctoral dissertation at Loyola University. This research will benefit special education students and provide an analysis of effective transition models.

The enclosed survey will provide this valuable information. Please complete and return this survey as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope. The survey is being conducted anonymously unless you indicate a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview. All survey and interview responses will be kept confidential.

This survey has been reviewed and its distribution has been approved by your administration.

I sincerely appreciate your cooperation.

Maria Smith  
Loyola Doctoral Candidate

## TRANSITION SURVEY

This survey is designed to describe transition models and activities currently used for transitioning eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. Results from the surveys will be available to participants and data will be analyzed for a doctoral dissertation. Information will be kept confidential and sources will be kept anonymous.

Please fill out current demographics.

Grade level of students: \_\_\_\_\_

Your position: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years in this position: \_\_\_\_\_

For each statement below, circle the number of the appropriate response.

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 = Strongly agree | 4 = Strongly disagree |
| 2 = Agree          | 5 = Don't know        |
| 3 = Disagree       |                       |

1. Procedures for transitioning students from elementary to high school are in place and implemented.

1            2            3            4            5

2. Staff of the receiving schools attend Individualized Education Plan (IEP) conferences for eighth grade students.

1            2            3            4            5

3. Staff of the receiving schools present overview of programs and services to parents of incoming freshmen with multiple disabilities.

1            2            3            4            5

4. Staff of receiving schools visit classes of incoming freshmen prior to IEP meetings.

1            2            3            4            5

5. Parents visit high school classes prior to IEP meetings.

1            2            3            4            5

6. Incoming freshmen make at least one visit to new school/class during their eighth grade year.

1            2            3            4            5

7. Current staff members have released time to accompany students to new school/class.

1            2            3            4            5

8. Incoming freshmen with disabilities attend summer school at high school, if appropriate.

1            2            3            4            5

9. The unique communication systems of incoming freshmen are described and understood by high school staff.

1            2            3            4            5

10. The unique behavior programs of incoming freshmen are described and understood by high school staff.

1            2            3            4            5

11. The unique equipment needs (wheelchairs, adaptive equipment) of incoming freshmen are described and understood by high school staff.

1            2            3            4            5

12. There is a continuing curriculum, with linear scope and sequence, from the elementary to the high school.

1            2            3            4            5

13. High school communicates with sending staff, after the student has been attending the high school program.

1            2            3            4            5

14. Parents are active participants in planning their child's transition to the high school.

1            2            3            4            5

1. Describe the methods by which information on elementary students' abilities and special needs are articulated to the receiving high school. Be specific.
2. Describe effective activities and components of transition programs in which students participate prior to attending high school. Be specific.
3. Describe, if any, barriers you have encountered when transitioning your eighth grade students to high school.
4. Please add any additional information or comments regarding transition of students with special needs to high school.

Please indicate whether you would be willing to fill out a follow-up survey and/or participate in an interview regarding effectiveness of transition planning for students with multiple disabilities.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would be willing to be interviewed regarding the effectiveness of transition programming for students with multiple disabilities.

I appreciate your cooperation and input. Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 708-524-3032.

Maria Smith  
Loyola Doctoral Candidate

## APPENDIX B



Fall, 1992

Dear Educator:

Your input is an integral part of a study on transition planning of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities. Recently, a survey was distributed to teachers of eighth grade students with multiple disabilities that described transition models and activities prior to attending high school. The second part of this study is to assess effective components of transition models for freshman students with multiple disabilities.

I am in the process of writing my doctoral dissertation at Loyola University. This research will benefit special education students and provide an analysis of effective practices contained within transition models.

The enclosed survey will provide this valuable information. Please complete and return this survey as soon as possible in the enclosed envelope. The survey is being conducted anonymously unless you indicate a willingness to participate in a follow-up interview. All survey and interview responses will be kept confidential.

This survey has been reviewed and its distribution has been approved by your administration.

I sincerely appreciate your cooperation.

Maria P. Smith  
Loyola Doctoral Candidate

## TRANSITION SURVEY

This survey is designed to describe transition models and activities that were used to transition eighth grade students with multiple disabilities prior to attending high school. Results from the surveys will be available to participants and data will be analyzed for a doctoral dissertation. Information will be kept confidential and sources will be kept anonymous.

Please fill out current demographics.

Grade level of students: \_\_\_\_\_

Your position: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years in this position: \_\_\_\_\_

For each statement below, circle the number of the appropriate response.

- |                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 = Strongly agree | 4 = Strongly disagree |
| 2 = Agree          | 5 = Don't know        |
| 3 = Disagree       |                       |

1. Procedures for transitioning students from elementary to high school are in place and implemented.  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
2. High school staff attended Individual Education Plan (IEP) conferences prior to attending their students attending their classes.  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
3. High school staff presented an overview of programs and services prior to eighth grade completion.  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
4. Staff of receiving high school visited classes of incoming freshman prior to transition IEP meetings.  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
5. Parents visit high school classes prior to transition IEP meetings.  

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Incoming freshman made at least one visit to new school/class during their eighth grade year.  
1            2            3            4            5
7. Staff from sending elementary school accompanied students to new school prior to graduation.  
1            2            3            4            5
8. Incoming freshman with disabilities attended summer school at high school.  
1            2            3            4            5
9. The unique communication systems of freshman students were described to and understood by high school staff.  
1            2            3            4            5
10. The unique behavior programs of freshman students were described to and understood by high school staff.  
1            2            3            4            5
11. The unique equipment needs (wheelchair, adaptive equipment) of freshman students were described to and understood by high school staff.  
1            2            3            4            5
12. There is a continuing curriculum, with linear scope and sequence, from the elementary to the high school.  
1            2            3            4            5
13. Elementary staff has made clear that they are available to discuss student issues/concerns with high school staff during the following year.  
1            2            3            4            5
14. High school staff has communicated with elementary school staff after the student graduated from elementary school.  
1            2            3            4            5
14. Parents actively participated in planning their child's transition to the high school.  
1            2            3            4            5

1. Describe how information on elementary students' abilities and special needs were articulated from the elementary school. Be specific.
2. Describe effective activities and components of transition programs in which students participated prior to attending high school. Be specific.
3. Describe the barriers you encountered when your students transitioned to high school.
4. Please add any additional information or comments regarding students with special needs to high school.

Please indicate whether you would be willing to be interviewed regarding effectiveness of transition planning for students with multiple disabilities.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would be willing to be interviewed regarding the effectiveness of transition planning for students with multiple disabilities.

☐ I would like to receive a copy of the results of this survey.

I appreciate your cooperation and input. Please return this survey in the enclosed envelope. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 708-524-3032.

Maria Smith  
Loyola Doctoral Candidate

## APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Maria P. Smith has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. L. Arthur Safer  
Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy Studies,  
Loyola University Chicago

Dr. Max A. Bailey  
Associate Professor and Chairperson, Educational  
Leadership and Policy Studies, Loyola University  
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Dr. Janis Fine  
Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Policy  
Studies, Loyola University Chicago

The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

November 5, 1996  
Date

  
Director's Signature